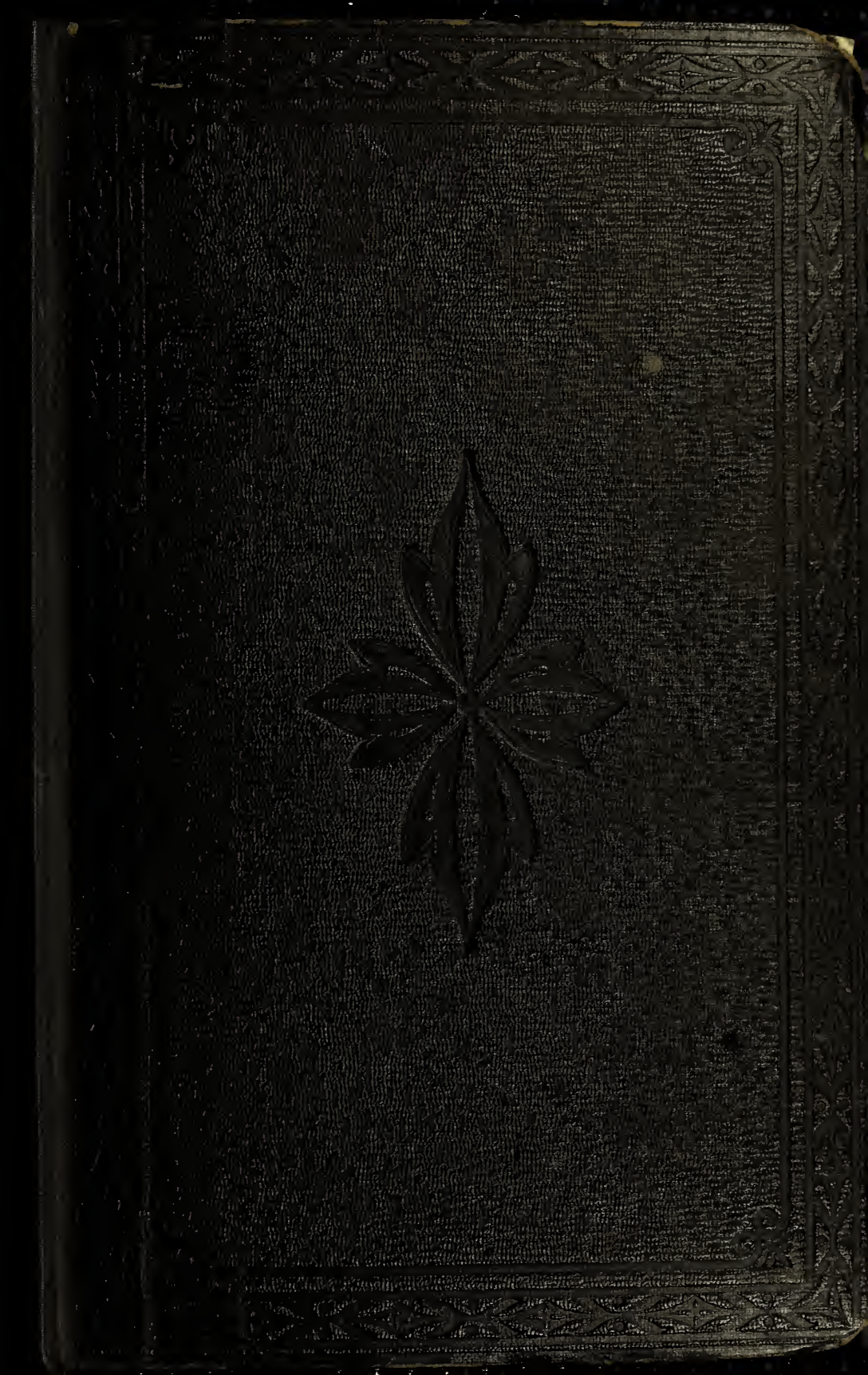




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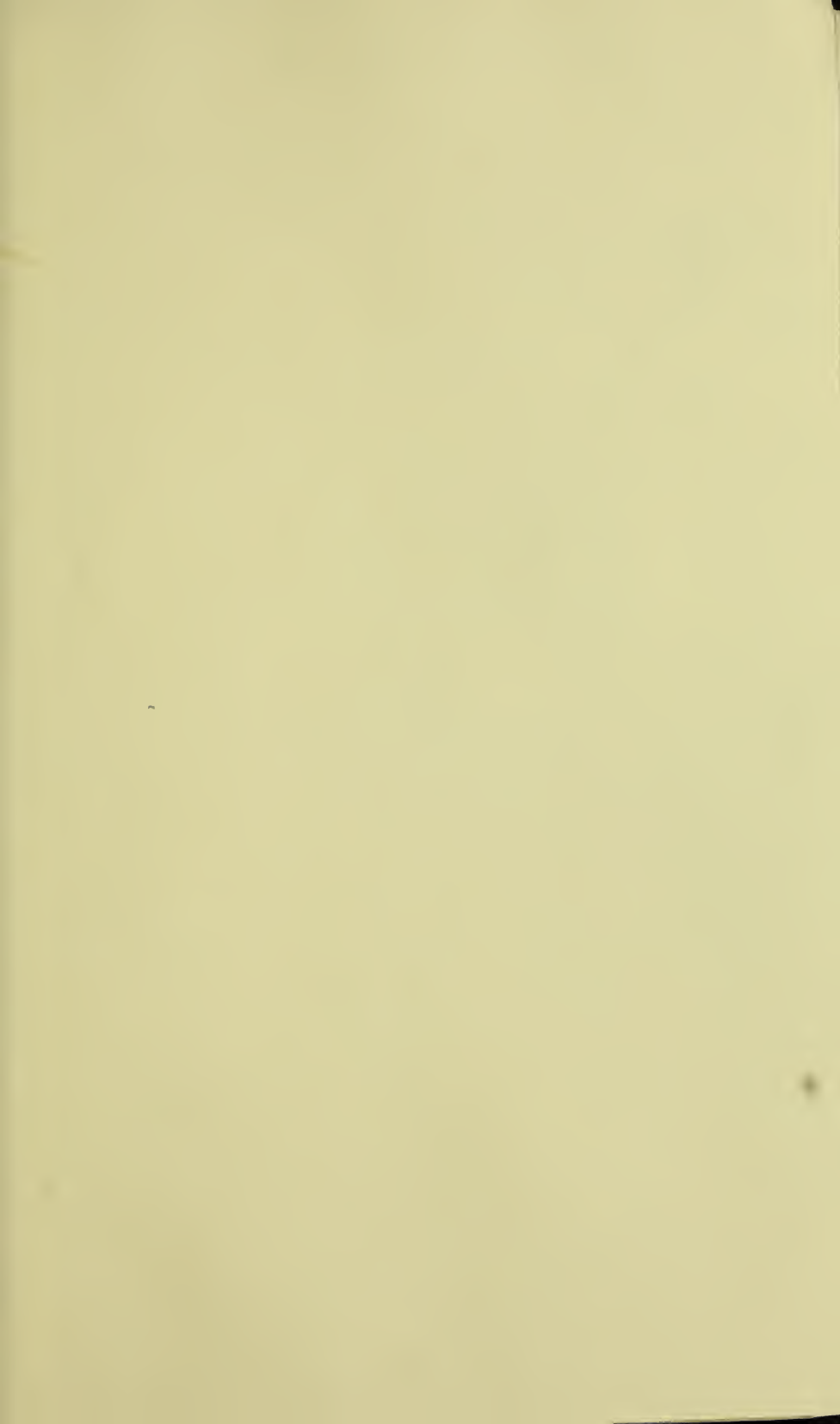
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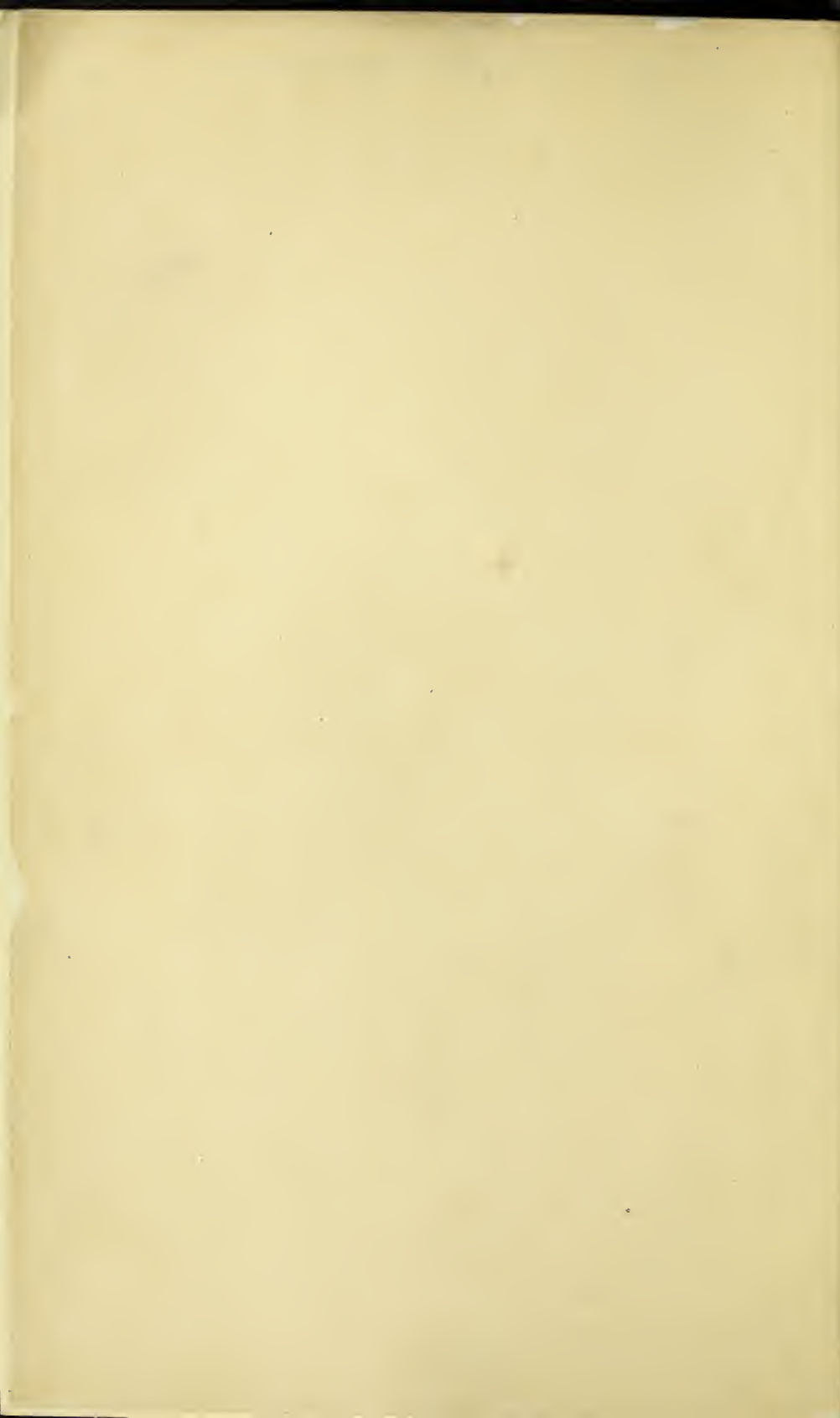








Thomas Paine



PROSTITUTION,

CONSIDERED IN

ITS MORAL, SOCIAL, AND SANITARY ASPECTS.

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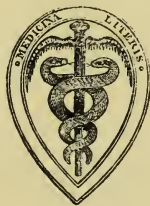
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WITH

PROPOSALS FOR THE MITIGATION AND PREVENTION
OF ITS ATTENDANT EVILS.

By WILLIAM ACTON, M.R.C.S.

FORMERLY EXTERNE TO THE FEMALE VENEREAL HOSPITAL IN PARIS; LATE SURGEON
TO THE ISLINGTON DISPENSARY;
FELLOW OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY; ETC. ETC.



LONDON:

JOHN CHURCHILL, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

MDCCCLVII.

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" Had the poets to fable a new mythology, the Eros of the London streets would be not the offspring of Venus, but the child of Sorrow and Starvation."

Phases of London Life, by E. L. BLANCHARD.



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PREFACE.

I HAVE often regretted that persons more learned and influential than myself have not publicly attempted to enforce upon the State the propriety, firstly, of arresting to some extent the unnecessary speed at which Prostitution is now eating into the heart of society ; and secondly, of recognising and opposing Venereal diseases upon public grounds.

Had I been so anticipated, I can imagine that by this time the work might have been well in hand. But unfortunately, the best of minds and the most excellent pens have hitherto refrained from the various topics involved, because (confounding delicacy with difficulty) they have conceived a superstition that they would find opposed to them an array of obstacles, all attempts to pass which would be futile, if not wrong. And thus so very few have ventured beyond the shelter of anonymous writing in the avowal of their opinions, that the topics in question have been avoided, and in the absence of reliable guides, have at last come to be virtually ignored by the public at large.

In the course of a special service at the Lourcine and Du Midi Hospitals at Paris, my attention was necessarily turned to Prostitution and its consequences. I, like others who have had the same opportunities of study, was pained when, on my return to this country, I compared the noble public charities I had quitted with our only special institution of the kind, the Lock Hospital. Fresh experience in London also strengthened my dissent from the vulgar error that early death overtakes the daughters of pleasure, as also my impression that the harlot's progress as often tends upwards as

downwards. I became daily more convinced that far from perishing in hospitals, workhouses, or obscure degradation, she generally, in course of time, amalgamates with the population ; and I argued to myself, that society could not be uninterested in her during her state of transition.

After privately maintaining this doctrine for some years, I ventured at length upon submitting to certain local and public authorities the moral, social, and sanitary considerations which seem to demand the public treatment of Venereal diseases. How I fared will appear in the following pages. It may suffice here to say, that little came of my suit. Still, cherishing the idea of State intervention, I continued to accumulate material here made use of, and more, that might have wearied the professional reader, to whom the deeper shadows of the great world offer no novelty, without profiting the few serious laymen whom it is my collateral hope to interest. At length, when the tone of public feeling seemed to indicate an appropriate time for calling the attention of society to its most deep-seated ailment, and inviting its consideration of remedies, I thought it due to my convictions that I should submit them, and the reasoning whereon they are based, to the ordeal of publication.

The reader who is a conscientious parent must perforce support me; for, were the educational and sanitary measures I advocate once in operation, with what diminished anxiety would he not contemplate the progress of his boys from infancy to manhood? The politician and the political economist are mine already, for are not armies and navies invalidated—is not labour enfeebled—is not even population checked by the evils against which I propose we should contend? The sympathies of all who can look kindly upon the sick, the sorry, and the fallen, must gain new impulse from the study of the facts, figures, and deductions, possibly new to them, which I have here marshalled for their use.

There are persons who, alas, will hear neither of reformatories nor of hospitals, but demand severity and suppression. To such as these I have attempted, in my brief notices of foreign police arrangements, to give some notion of the limited extent of vice over which

the continental authorities can, with all their machinery, maintain control; and of the spur given to immorality in private by its suppression in public. I have also sketched for them, I hope intelligibly, the boundaries which English common sense will rigorously prescribe to the prostitute-regulations they sigh for; and on the other hand, the sanction that same common sense would, in my opinion, extend to a broader application of the existing law.

For those who profess a real or fictitious ignorance of prostitution, its miseries, and its ill effects—and those again who plead conscience as an excuse for inaction, I have this one reply. Pointing to the outward signs of prostitution in our streets and hospitals, I inquire whether we can flatter ourselves that the subject has drifted into a satisfactory state on the “know-nothing” and “do-nothing” principles. I hint at the perilous self-sufficiency of the Pharisee, and the wilful blindness of the Levite, who “passed by on the other side;” and I press upon them, that after reading this work, and testing its author’s veracity, they should either refute its arguments or be themselves converted.

The Sanitary Association I have sketched may at first sight appear to some of my readers Quixotic, if not immoral. But I have so often found, on submitting it to thinking men, that derision and censure gave place to approval and encouragement, that as an alternative only I have resolved to propound it. Let those to whom it may appear ridiculous, either amend it (which I grant is possible), or unite with me in agitating for more acceptable means of furthering its object; and if it find opponents on the score of religion, let these mark that I advance it not to supplant the Church and State—the proper parents, guardians, and teachers of the wicked as of the virtuous—but to fill the void created by their *lâches*. I am ready, and I should rejoice to give them their due precedence; but even without them *something* should be done. It is by no means certain, moreover, that exhortations to prudence and self-respect may not better prepare the heart of a vicious woman to receive the foundation of morality than the burnt tracts of the missionary or the hated staff of the policeman.

The apprehension sometimes suggested to me, that a work like

this might have a prejudicial action upon the innocence of youth has, I confess, in no way fettered my pen. Regret it as we may, this is an age of male and female pre-maturity; but hence, to my thinking, it is more fit and reasonable that true light should be made manifest than that it should be veiled. But, in any case, these pages will not be vended or purchased at street corners. Their price, especially, and the channels through which alone they are likely to be attainable, preclude the idea of their becoming an investment for the pocket-money of school-children or the savings of nursery-maids. Nothing favours the probability that they will find their way to youth and innocence, unless with the privity of age and experience. I have only, therefore, to remind alarmists, that not on the author, but on the purchaser, must rest the responsibility of their falling into young hands without proper interpretation and commentary.

I have little to say in the way of apology, for my plain speaking. The nature of the subject has forced this upon me. To have called things here treated of by other than their right names would have been in any writer an absurdity—in me a gross one. My style is, I regret, somewhat rugged. The experiences I have collected may to optimists or recluses appear exaggerated. The visions I have indulged in may be hard to grasp. But this most complicated knot demands a swordsman, not an infant. The inhabitants of a provincial city demanded of Lord Palmerston that the angel of pestilence should be stayed by a day of national prayer and fasting. I will fast with you, and pray with you, was the statesman's answer, but let us also drain, scrub, wash, and be clean. Let us exorcise the demon, but let us also try to leave no foothold for him. Thus is it with Prostitution and its resultant evils. Prayer and lamentation will not cure them—sackcloth and ashes will not arrest the deterioration of our national fibre. The schemes of Reformatories, Maids' Protection Societies, Vice and Obscene Book Suppression Societies, all amiable though they be in the abstract, are quoad the great enterprise but paltry, peddling scratches on the surface of evil. They will ever be miserably partial in their effects, if not utterly abortive. A grave internal malady lurks deep within the body social,

and if society will not hear these words of mine, or words like them from others, the patient will be extinct before the disease is eradicated.

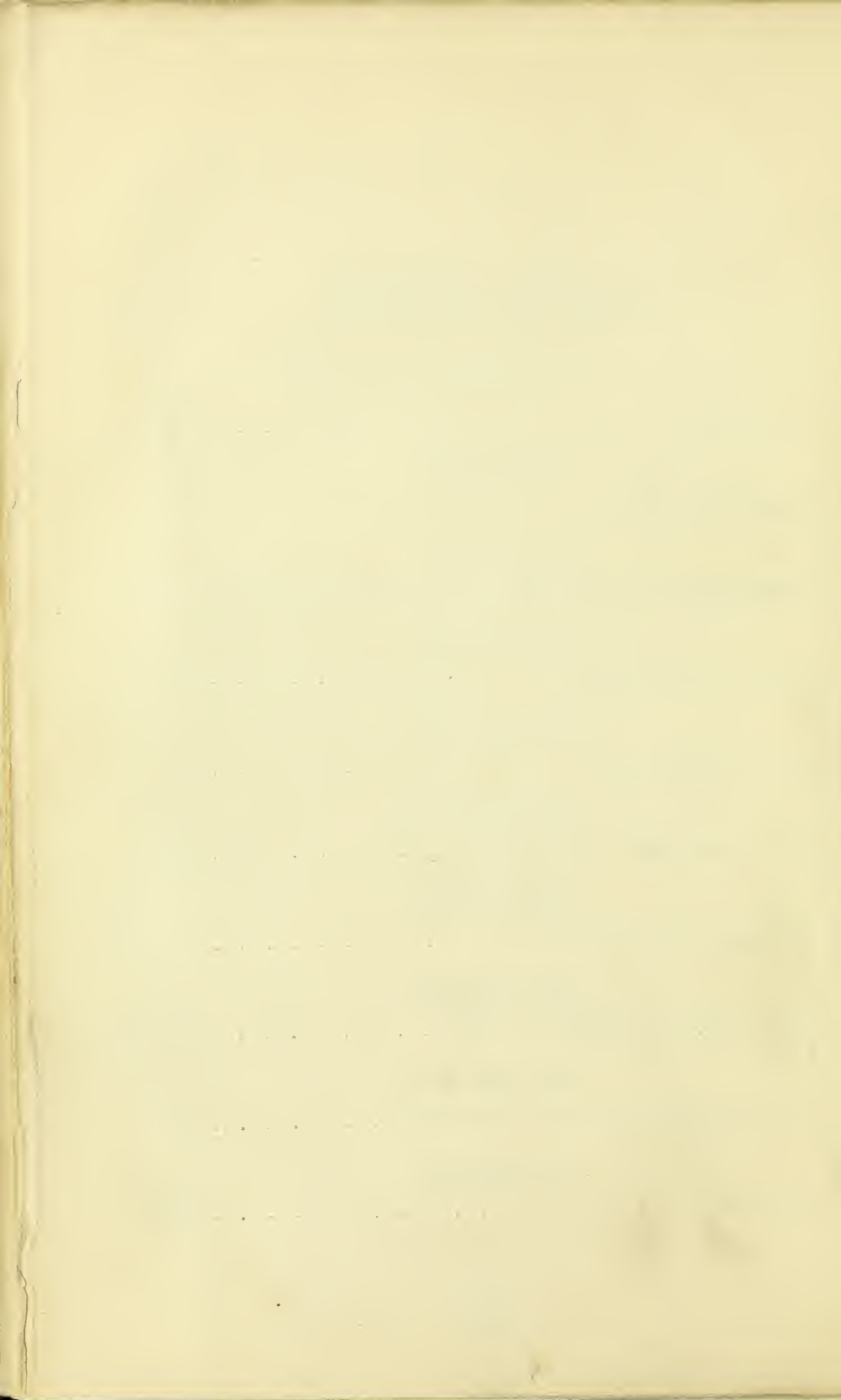
I shall have occasion, in the body of the text, to express my thanks to several gentlemen whose communications I have turned to good account. I may here acknowledge my obligations to the surgeons of the various hospitals, who have kindly placed at my disposal the best statistical information within their reach; to friends who have lent me countenance in a task not always congenial either to themselves or me; to others who have given good counsel; to Messrs. Trebuchet and Poirat-Duval, joint editors of the third edition of Parent-Duchâtelet; and lastly, to my valued friend and collaborateur, Mr. Horace Green, whose energy and perfect appreciation of the objects I have in view have been, I may truly say, invaluable to me.

46, *Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square,*
October 1st, 1857.



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INTRODUCTION.

"It is time to burst through the veil of that artificial bashfulness which has injured the growth, while it has affected the features, of genuine purity. Society has suffered enough from that spurious modesty which lets fearful forms of vice swell to a rank luxuriance rather than point at their existence,—which coyly turns away its head from the 'wounds and putrifying sores' that are eating into our system, because it would have to blush at the exposure."*

"Had I not," says Parent-Duchâtelet, "a deep conviction that my researches on prostitution would tend to the advantage of the public health and morals, I would not have published their results. I have laid bare one of the great miseries of humanity. Serious men, for whom I have written, will appreciate my motives. Those who love their fellows will neither fear to follow me in the study, nor avert their eyes from the picture I have presented to their view. In order to know how much good is yet undone, and to enter with any prospect of success upon the path of amelioration, it is necessary to be acquainted with things as they exist—it is necessary to know the truth."†

"There are some questions so painful and perplexing, that statesmen, moralists, and philanthropists shrink from them by common consent. The subject to which the following pages are devoted is one of these. Of all the social problems which philosophy has to deal with, this is, we believe, the darkest, the knottiest, and the saddest. From whatever point of view it is regarded, it presents considerations so difficult and so grievous, that in this country no ruler or writer has yet been found with nerve to face the sadness, or resolution to encounter the difficulties. Statesmen see the mighty evil lying on the main pathway of the world, and, with a groan of pity and despair, 'pass by on the other side.' They act like the timid patient, who, fearing and feeling the existence of a terrible disease, dares not examine its symptoms or probe its depth, lest he should realize it too clearly, and possibly aggravate its intensity by the mere investigation. Or, like a more foolish animal still, they hide their head at the mention of the danger, as if they hoped, by ignoring, to annihilate it.

"It is from a strong conviction that this is not worthy behaviour on the part of those who aspire to guide either the actions or the opinions

* Quarterly Review, p. 359, Sept. 1848. Article on Prostitution.

† Prostitution dans la Ville de Paris, third edition, vol. ii. p. 391.

of others, that, after much hesitations and many misgivings, we have undertaken to speak of so dismal and delicate a matter. We are aware that mischief is risked by bringing the subject prominently before the public eye, and that the benefit to be derived from the discussion should be so clear and certain as unquestionably to overbalance this risk. We are aware that it is a matter on which it is not easy to speak openly—not always possible to speak with confidence as to facts, causes, or consequences; we are aware that we shall expose ourselves to much scoffing from the vulgar and light-minded; much dishonest misrepresentation from those who recklessly echo any popular cry; much unmerited anger from those who deem that refinement forbids them to speak of things which it does not forbid them to do; much serious blame on the part of those who think that no object can justify us in compelling attention to so revolting a moral sore. We have weighed all these obstacles; and we have concluded that the end we have in view, and the chance of the good we may effect and the suffering we may mitigate, warrant us in disregarding them. We think that such considerations have already too long withheld serious and benevolent men from facing one of the sorest evils that the English sun now shines upon. Our divines, our philanthropists, our missionaries, nay, even our *sœurs de la charité*, do not shrink from entering, in person, the most loathsome abodes of sin and misery,—or from penetrating into the lowest dens of filth and pollution, where human despair and degradation ever dragged itself to die,—when led thither by the impulse of compassion and the hope of good. Why, then, should we allow indolence, disgust, or the fear of misconstruction, to deter us from entering upon an inquiry as to the possibility of mitigating the very worst form which human wretchedness and degradation can assume? The best and purest of our race do not feel themselves repelled from, or tarnished by, the darkest haunts of actual guilt and horror, where pain is to be assuaged, or where souls are to be saved. Let us act by *subjects*, as they act by *scenes*.

“Feeling, then, that it is a false and mischievous delicacy, and a culpable moral cowardice, which shrinks from the consideration of the great social vice of Prostitution, because the subject is a loathsome one;—feeling, also, that no good can be hoped unless we are at liberty to treat the subject, and all its collaterals, with perfect freedom, both of thought and speech;—convinced that the evil must be probed with a courageous and unshrinking hand before a cure can be suggested, or palliatives can safely be applied;—we have deliberately resolved to call public attention to it, though we do so with pain, reluctance, and diffidence.”*

In a previous work, of a more strictly professional character than the present, I advocated at some length the consideration of prostitution upon sanitary grounds. I illustrated by the statistics then open to me, and which I have since been enabled to bring down to the present day for use in the following pages, the lamentable ravages of venereal disease. I showed how the out-patients of our metropolitan hospitals suffering

* Westminster Review, July, 1850.

from the diseases traceable to prostitution far outnumbered those afflicted by any other complaint, forming, in fact, nearly 50 per cent. of the aggregate. I showed to what extent the efficiency of our military and naval services is positively impaired by the same cause; and I brought forward the experience of continental cities in proof that many of its melancholy results in London might be obviated, or at least palliated, if we only could or would act on the defensive.

At that time, however, I dared do little more than point out these consequences; and for going even thus far I was subjected, in certain quarters, to the pains and penalties so ably described by the Westminster Reviewer, although the subject and professional nature of the book removed it, in great measure, from the scope of general criticism.

But the success of my first experiment upon the public pulse has so far emboldened me, that I now not merely return to the charge with my former *matériel*, but, backed by the endeavours of others, and the opinions of many indulgent judges, I shall argue the propriety of ameliorating the sanitary condition of prostitutes, from later and still more accurate statistics, and attempt—with the greatest respect, be it said, for the scruples of others—to combat arguments, based upon religious grounds, against any movement on the part of English society towards offering a determined resistance to the spread of venereal diseases. At no period has the public mind been so well prepared to listen to suggestions of a practical nature, and to such I shall endeavour to confine myself.

I may as well state, *in limine*, that I have no intention of advocating the adoption by Great Britain of the system of prostitution-management practised by the police of continental States; but it must not be imagined that there are no suggestions of value derivable from foreign experience,—and I shall point out, therefore, a few features which might be engrafted upon our own no-management system without infringement of liberty.

Although an author may hazard, as I have hinted, the favour of many, by venturing at all upon such delicate ground, I am aware that his views, on the other hand, may fall grievously short in the opinion of some ardent and enthusiastic persons. The schemes I now advocate for the assistance as well as the control of prostitutes would have been far too mild and inefficient for my own young fancy, before deep and careful consideration had matured my views, and the advice and practice of official men had shown me the value of those good old beasts of burden, “compromise” and “expediency,” and the difficulties of even slight innovation. I have found it easy to discern diseases, and a task of no great difficulty to point out remedies; but as in medical, so in social therapeutics, the question often arises—Can good be done at the cost of no harm? May not the removal of one abuse originate another? In doing justice or charity to one class, may we not hazard an entail of wrong upon another? Can we take steps to prevent this or that evil without grazing our neighbour’s dearest prejudices, if not opposing a stumbling-block, in some cases, to his religious belief?

I propose, in the following pages, to inquire whether, in the interest of society and civilization, on what are commonly called sanitary and social grounds, some compromise, which I should term “RECOGNITION,” may not be effected between sanction and pretended ignorance of vice, and whether

some useful mean may not exist between unbridled licence and despotism, which for want of a better name might be called "REGULATION." I intend to advance, that a large class of our women should not be ignored or excommunicated, and to show why they should be as worthy of improvement, regulation, and even special legislation, as murderers, thieves, gamblers, and other male members of the dangerous classes. Let the objectors strike, but hear.

Young persons are, I believe, generally led to believe that the class of unfortunate females are, with few exceptions, Messalinas and Dalilahs,—living in riot for a little season,—dying neglected and miserable—of most dreadful diseases, or by violence or suicide,—upon dung-hills or in ditches. It is marvellous, too, how this belief grows with the growth of many who, having been gently trained, have as adults kept themselves unspotted from the world. But as some few are aware, who have soberly used their opportunities of observation, this is as gross a fallacy as that every prostitute is a *Dame aux Camelias*. The sufferings of the class are great enough, as these pages will show, but their amalgamation with the population, to which I shall presently allude, seems, notwithstanding all our contrary impressions, to be so regular, so extensive, and to all appearances so much upon the increase, not owing to the spread of vicious desires alone, but also to the action of 'society' itself, that it seems to me we must no longer hold them outlaws during their passage through their furnace of purification. Granted their admission within the pale of the law, their better regulation and the amelioration of their state will, I think, follow as a matter of course.

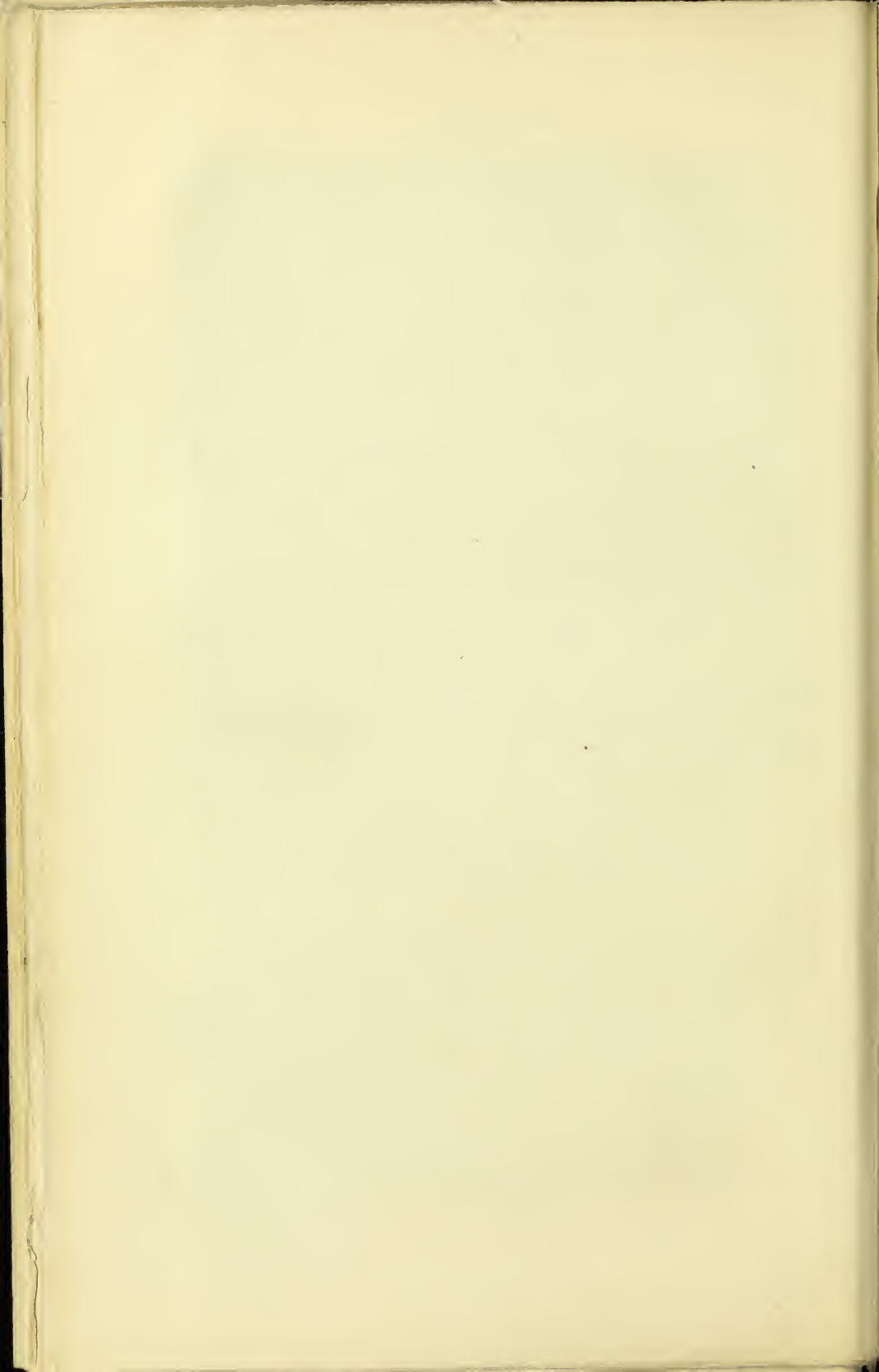
While I do not propose to aim at high colouring, I hope I shall be able to avoid the imputation of flippancy. The nature of the subject demands a sobriety of tone, and at the same time a degree of freedom from emotion or exaggeration, which few but professional men whose duties throw them among the persons and scenes here treated of can hope to acquire. I wish to plead in cool reason. If I have no desire, nor the requisite flow of words, to dress up vice in those genteel and fascinating habiliments in which it is paraded in some lighter books, I must confess that long familiarity with the subject precludes the possibility of my attaining that rapture of horror with which another class of observers, perhaps involuntarily, clothe their notes upon bad society.

I believe that the celebrated series of pictures entitled "The Harlot's Progress," and the commonplace reflections which usually accompany engravings after them, have done much towards founding the necessity for this work. They have been, I believe, the text for many a sermon, the substratum of a thousand and one religious tracts, and have inspired our people from generation to generation with the notion of a Pariah class existing within the bosom of society, whom the world of sinners might be pardoned for stoning to death. They have unfortunately diffused injurious and abused impressions on the subject they profess to delineate, and have assisted the natural supineness of men to defer a righteous adjustment of the questions it involves. It is no more a necessary consequence that the loss of her honour should divest one woman of the other feminine attributes, than that another who has preserved it should therefore be in all other respects perfect and complete.

It is monstrous to pretend that every fallen woman must first have had, and then have cast away, the pearl religion, which so many of the pure and chaste have died without a glimpse of. Monstrous, again, to think so ill of her on whom so little but the fatal gift of beauty was bestowed, that in the garden of her soul she has not brought to fruit the healing plant of holiness. The common germ of it, indeed, was there, but fallen in a bye place, a little, solitary, untended seed, where the weeds also were sown broadcast and bounteously nurtured by wicked man. Most hard, again, that sown as it was, grown without the needful light from heaven, and therefore doomed to certain fruitlessness, this weakly plant alone, from out a world of pompous, self-asserting, barren fig-trees (barren in spite of every favouring condition), should be fixed upon for the axe and the outer fire.

Monstrous, un-Christianlike, un-Englishlike are those who would pass upon her, whose calling is an epilepsy of punishment, the sentence of excommunication that is withheld by the hand of unrighteous conventionality from her tempter and accomplice, and empty the vial of social wrath upon her who is vulgar and obtrusive, while mere fairylike chastisement is considered enough for the notorious sinner of good breeding and position. Foolish and shortsighted those who imagine that if they may send forth the scape-goat into the wilderness, they can also, under our dispensation, impose the burden of their sins upon her.

I shall endeavour to occupy the reader as little as possible with statistics. As regards prostitution in this country, I could not have entered, had I been so minded, into the elaborate details which continental police arrangements place in some measure at the disposal of continental authors ; and I have furnished such particulars only of its condition elsewhere, as may help to elucidate the policy we might adopt towards those who follow the calling in England, their ministers, and their parasites.



CHAPTER I.

PROSTITUTION DEFINED.

ETYMOLOGY would, of course, at once suggest a "standing forth, or plying for hire in open market," as a definition of the word prostitution. Charitable and refined persons instinctively recoil from its general use, under the very natural impression that the essence of "prostitution" is not so much *the receipt of consideration as community*; but, on the other hand, many forcible divines and moralists have maintained that all illicit intercourse is prostitution, and that this word is as justly applicable as those of "fornication" and "whoredom" to the female who, whether for hire or not, voluntarily surrenders her virtue. According to them, her first offence is as much an act of prostitution as its repetition.

For the purpose of the politico-statistical researches which (more to find occupation for its superfluous bureaucracy than, as is sometimes supposed, through mere tyrannical curiosity) the French administrators have, since the time of the first Republic, made into prostitution, as well as everything else, they arrange disorderly women under two heads, *femmes débauchées* and *prostituées*. The former, instead of being, as would at first sight appear, a generic term, seems to distinguish the numerous troop known as *femmes galantes* and *filles clandestines*, and corresponds with the "kept mistresses" and more reserved class of prostitutes in this country. Over it, while a certain degree of self-respect is preserved, the police neither assert nor can maintain control. Its members enjoy to the full extent their civic rights, and a maxim of law is acknowledged in their favour, which their sisters of this country are obliged to maintain for themselves,—often to the disgust, and occasionally to the amusement, of the public. "*Mulieris, quæ non palam sed passim et paucis sui copiam facit, actio competit adversus eum qui eam meretricem vocavit.*"

Into the second class, which answers to our common street-walkers, the French authorities do their best to drive such of the first as they consider to have forfeited their independent position. It is held that the legally established and repeated exercise of fornication as a calling, combined with public notoriety thereof, arrest *in flagrante*, proved by witnesses other than the informer or the police agent, constitute the "prostitute." The prostitute has been more particularly described by a French author as the woman who abjures society, repudiates its laws, and forfeits all claims upon it, by adopting those "*habitudes scandaleuses hardiment et constamment publiques,*" through which she passes into

"cet état de brutalité scandaleuse dont l'autorité doit réprimer les excès."^{*}

According to the Board of Public Morals at Berlin, all voluntary sexual abandonment for a consideration is held to be prostitution. The distinctions, however, between the several shades of female frailty are so faint, and it seems so immaterial whether we apply to all erring women indiscriminately the term "prostitute," or another, perhaps coarser one, about which no etymological cavil could arise, that I confess I think any further disquisition upon this head quite uncalled-for and uninteresting. I shall therefore assume, with the divines and moralists, for the purpose of my present inquiry, that the fact of "hiring," whether openly or secretly, whether by an individual or a plurality in succession, constitutes prostitution.

* Parent-Duchâtelet, troisième édition, tom. i. p. 25.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS TO THE RECOGNITION OF PROSTITUTION
CONSIDERED.

THE difficulties the philanthropist and surgeon have to meet in dealing with this subject are raised mainly on its moral and religious side. Those who would ameliorate the physical condition of prostitutes on behalf of society are at once met by the objection—"Disease is a punishment for sin;" "syphilis the penalty paid by society for indulgence in fornication;" and many worthy persons are so deeply impressed with these convictions, as to say, "We will have none of your sanitary or preventive measures, in this respect at least." And again, "The present chances of contracting disease is the strongest means of deterring men from being unchaste. This risk is the most potent barrier against vice. Remove it, and you put a premium on fornication, discourage matrimony, and upset society."

It must be my endeavour to show the worth of this kind of objection, and further, to advance views which I trust may not be deemed incompatible with Christianity and good morals. I admit, without hesitation, that contagious diseases operate with many a gentleman of education and refinement as deterrents from fornication, and that, involving, as they in general do, both bodily suffering and financial loss, they exert a major force upon the unlimited recurrence to debauchery of the poor, coarse, incontinent rake; I allow that, without this pressure, men's sex passion is so strong, and the training to continence has been so neglected, that a life of sensual indulgence would, in the present state of society, be more a rule than an exception; and I know that it exercises some little influence when religion is unheeded, especially among the bulk of the better educated youth, whose minds are so little made up upon the sinfulness of fornication, that I believe the fear of suffering on earth operates more as a curb upon its licentious practice than the more remote contingency of punishment hereafter.

But, conceding this certain amount of deterrent power to the liability to disease, we shall look in vain for proof that it has had any effect towards extirpating the calling of the harlot, or the traffic in female virtue, which has of late years forced itself upon the attention of our legislature. For every thousand upon whom it does operate, there are ten thousand thoughtless, passionate, habitually licentious men, on whom all lessons are thrown away, and as many defiant scoffers at religion and morality, who will point out some grey-haired offender, permitted by Providence to "go on still in the way of his wickedness," for every "frightful example" that can be adduced on the other side.

This may probably be considered a low estimate of public morality, but it seems to be that which an important fraction of the religious world incline to adopt and act upon. Man has taken upon himself to say, that the purpose of the Almighty is answered when the infraction of His law is suppressed by terror,—that it is the duty of the Christian to watch with calm serenity the growing crop that waits the scythe of the destroying angel, so long as he can take precautions to secure his own exemption from the fatal harvest.

With regard to ordinary crimes and offences, we are gradually repealing this Draconian code, and coming round to the more Christian belief that preventive dispositions may more than compensate for relaxation of severity. In the case of juvenile vagrancy, we no longer confine ourselves to the flogging or incarceration of the primary offender, but we combine his milder punishment with some pressure upon the parent—his indirect accomplice—whom we mulct towards the maintenance of the young prisoner, considering him responsible for the child's appearance in the dock and the jail. Society tried severity, but having found it no deterrent, now racks its ingenuity, not so much for penal devices as for schemes to check the supply of crime by appealing to both parents and children by means of education, reformatories, and liberal relief, that they should the more honourably perform their duties to each other and to the community.

Such are our modern engines of social improvement, though we have by no means loosed our hold from the salutary rod of punishment. In former days society thought of vengeance alone, and struck blindly and wickedly at His creatures in the sacred name of a long-suffering and merciful Creator.

If conscience still permits, and experience of successful results still encourages, the most eminent Christians to persevere in their attempts to check the spread and intensity of ordinary crime by mitigating those ancillary miseries which are both its provocatives and its results, why, I ask, should perverse, sacrilegious industry, and panderism to vice and immorality, be recklessly imputed to those who seek to improve the physical condition of a vicious class, whom outraged nature heavily afflicts by permission of the Almighty, but whose heaven-sent punishment, with which we may not interfere, is "the worm that never dies?"

I may mention, if it will do aught to conciliate conscientious opponents of the tolerant system I am about to recommend, that all modern investigations tend to show how inadequate are human means to eradicate venereal disease from society. It will probably ever maintain any value it may now possess as a preventive of fornication. Precautions and sanitary regulations may go far to mitigate its evils; but enough will remain to operate as a warning and a penalty.

While, however, I confess how inefficient have been the endeavours, and how faint the hopes, of those who have contemplated anything approaching to the *eradication* of the disease,* I must call all medical

* It appears that, notwithstanding the precautions taken with reference to prostitution in Paris, the hospitals of that city are crowded with diseased men and women. The severity of the complaint, however, is progressively abating in consequence of the rigorous but partial sanitary regulations I shall presently have occasion to consider. M. Michel Lévy, head of the French military medical staff, states in a recent treatise, that in 1842,

experience to witness that we have already done much to alleviate the sufferings of mankind. We have not yet met with the fate of the apostate Julian; but, on the contrary, the Providence we are taxed with rebelling against would seem to have already blessed our endeavours. The evil remains, it is true, but its ravages have ceased from the devastating fury of the olden days.

It seems to me an usurpation of the divine function, for man tacitly to aggravate, by refusing to alleviate, the punishment of one particular vice, as indefensible as would be his presuming to originate and to mete out such a doom. Were such an abominable creed to be carried to its length, what a miserable prospect would be opened to poor, frail humanity—all sinners as we are! When all are sinners, and when all sickness may be chastisement from the Almighty, how few of us, once stricken, would be saved for repentance and amendment! To deprecate the fatal end of disease would be a minor sin, and the art of the physician a gross impiety.

Mr. Garnier, late Chaplain to the Lock Hospital, has very delicately replied to this class of objections, in the following forcible passage:—

“We would not say anything except in perfect admiration of that spirit of high-toned morality by which many in the upper circles of society in this country are so happily impregnated; although we are aware that many excellent persons from that cause refuse their support to the charity, fearful lest by so doing they should give their countenance to vice, and should be virtually fostering those very penal evils which the hospital is founded to eradicate. The governors would only request such persons calmly to examine the question in all its bearings.

“It is true that many of the objects of its merciful protection are sinners, suffering directly from the effects of their own profligate conduct. But is the mitigation of no evil or disease to be attempted except such as have been inherited, or have come upon the sufferer while pursuing the path of propriety and virtue? Within the limits of how small a circle could the benevolence of the Christian be then confined? To how few cases in our general hospitals could assistance be conscientiously extended? how many must be suffered to pine away in abject destitution? Were this a principle of conduct enjoined by Divine authority and commended by Divine example, surely the sun would not now rise upon the unjust, nor would the rain descend upon the unthankful and the evil,—no scheme of redemption would ever have been formed for our fallen race,—nor would the Saviour Himself, our great example, have healed in His day all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people, without any reference to the characters of the sufferers or the causes of their maladies.”

But most immediate Scriptural sanction can be found for the views of the mercifully-minded. Do we read in St. Luke's Gospel that our Saviour forbade the presence and the contact of the Magdalen? His answer to the scandalizing Pharisee was, “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.” Again, it is no vain repetition here to

5059 patients were admitted into the Parisian Civil Venereal Hospitals, that 7648 out-patients were relieved there, and that in the military hospital, the Val de Grâce, 2798 soldiers were treated the same year—and these, it must be remembered, form but a part of the population similarly affected during the period.

quote, for the passage is too beautiful—I might almost say too dramatic—for condensation, what took place when Jesus delivered the woman taken in adultery (John viii.):

And the Scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned. But what sayest thou?

This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote upon the ground, as though he heard them not.

So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

And again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, *beginning at the eldest, even unto the last*: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, WOMAN, WHERE ARE THOSE THINE ACCUSERS? HATH NO MAN CONDEMNED THEE?

She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE: GO, AND SIN NO MORE.*

In St. Matthew, chap. xxi. ver. 31, we have additional evidence that the treatment of unchaste women was put forward by the Jewish priests and lawyers as a touchstone to the Saviour, and taken up by Him as such. He spoke to them in the temple thus freely of the possibility of the salvation of the harlot:—"Verily, the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him."

Any pretence of mine to originality in claiming a favourable construction of these passages would be superfluous. They speak for themselves, and loudly, in favour of greater charitableness, and they need no comment. I only argue from them that no gospel warranty exists for the enhancement of the prostitute's degradation by a sinful world—for the thickening of the slough of despond in which she is already steeped.

The tendency of the present age is to Christianize, according to the true spirit and meaning of the word, the world we live in. Of late years much has been done towards remedying its old intolerance, but much yet remains to be done. The churchman, guided, it may be, by the best of intentions, still, as of old, feels called upon to oppose many views of statesmen, many projects of sanitarians. But whatever the practice they cling to, the most conservative have begun to recognise, as a fixed

* I should mention that this entire history, from chap. vii. ver. 53, to chap. viii. ver. 11, is found wanting in many ancient manuscripts of the gospels, upon which strange circumstance Dr. Pusey remarks: "The inference is obvious that men either must have suspected the authenticity of the passage, or that they must have dreaded lest so merciful a sentence should prove productive of evil in the Church of Christ. But who and what are we that we should presume thus to judge of the work of the Spirit? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? What know we of this woman's age, history, character, mind, heart?"

law, that as civilization advances, they must move—or be swept—ahead, curbing their more elevated religious theories by liberal Christian charity, guiding and counselling where they may not command, and not as of old ignoring expediency.

A Scottish divine, Dr. Wardlaw, thus uncompromisingly objects to any save repressive action :—"To take vice under legal regulation is to give it, in the public eye, a species of legal sanction. It can never be right to regulate what is wrong to do and wrong to tolerate. To licence immorality is to protect and encourage it. Individuals and houses which have a place on the public registers naturally regard themselves, and are regarded by others, as being under the law's guardianship and authority,—not, as they ought to be, under its ban and repression."

With regard to the Doctor's last assertion, that a place on the public register of dangerous and suspected objects can be a convertible term with "under the favour of the law," I have this to say, that I have yet to learn that so gross a delusion prevails among the keepers and frequenters of thieves' lodging-houses, gaming-houses, and betting-houses here, and of houses of ill-fame abroad. The phrase "known to the police," is synonymous among ourselves with discredit. The fact alone is pregnant with a discomfort to the "known" individual, which he cannot shake off. No greater grievance frets the liberated convict, the incipient thief, the gambler, and every low, knavish, dissolute character, than the sleepless eye of the law, which he knows has never left, nor will ever leave him, from the hour of his first appearance on the "public registers." In answer to the leading feature of the extract from Wardlaw, I can do no better than reprint at length the following forcible and admirable passage from an article on Prostitution in the "Westminster Review" of July, 1850 :—

"It is urged that the 'tacit sanction' given to vice by such a *recognition* of prostitution as would be involved in a system of supervision, registration, or licence, would be a greater evil than all the maladies (moral and physical) which now flow from its unchecked prevalence. But let it be considered that by ignoring, we do not abolish it ; we do not even conceal it ; it speaks aloud ; it walks abroad ; it is a vice as patent and as well known as drunkenness ; it is already 'tacitly sanctioned' by the mere fact of its permitted or connived-at existence—by the very circumstance which stares us in the face, that the legislative and executive authorities, seeing it, deploring it, yet confess by their inaction their inability to check it, and their unwillingness to prohibit it, and virtually say to the unfortunate prostitutes and their frequenters—'As long as you create no public scandal, but throw a decent veil over your proceedings, we shall not interfere with you, but shall regard you as an inevitable evil.' By an attempt to regulate and control them, the authorities would confess nothing more than they already in act acknowledge—viz., their desire to mitigate an evil which they have discovered their incompetency to suppress. By prohibiting the practice of prostitution *under certain conditions*, they do not legalize or authorize it under all other conditions ; they simply announce that, *under these certain conditions*, they feel called upon promptly to interfere. The legislature does not forbid drunkenness, knowing that it would be futile to do so : but if a man, when drunk, is disorderly, pugnacious, or indecent, or in other mode compromises

public comfort or public morals, it steps forward to arrest and punish him; yet, surely, by no fair use of words can it be represented as thereby *sanctioning* drunkenness when unaccompanied by indecorous or riotous behaviour. It merely declares that in the one case interference falls within its functions, and that in the other case it does not. Likewise, in the parallel case under consideration, such legislative interference as we suggest would merely hold this clear, sound, intelligible language:— ‘Prostitution *per se* is a sin against taste, morals, and religion; but it is one of those vices, like bad temper, hatred, malice, and covetousness, which, however noxious, it is not a part of the duty of government actively to repress or punish; the propagation of syphilis is an overt act of public mischief, a crime committed against society, which it clearly falls within their province to prevent.’

“One word more on this subject. We cannot imagine that any one can seriously suppose that prostitution would be made either more generally attractive or respectable by the greater decency and decorum which administrative supervision would compel it to throw over its exterior. We know that the absence of these does not deter men of irregular passions from the low pursuit; and we know, moreover, that wherever these are needed for the behoof of a more scrupulous and refined class of fornicators, they are to be found. We are convinced, also, that much of the permanent ruin to the feelings and character which results from the habit of visiting the haunts of prostitution, is to be attributed to the coarse language and the brutal manners which prevail there; and that this vice, like many others, would lose much of its evil by losing all of grossness that is separable from it. Nor do we fear that the improvement in the *tone* of prostitution which would thus result, would render its unhappy victims less anxious to escape from it. Soften its horrors and gild its loathsomeness as you may, there will always remain enough to revolt all who are not wholly lost. Much, too—everything almost—is gained if you can retain *any* degree of self-respect among the fallen: the more of this that remains, the greater chance is there of ultimate redemption; it is always a mistaken and a cruel policy to allow vice to grow desperate and reckless. It is for the interest of society at large, as well as for that of the guilty individual, that we should never break down the bridge behind any sinner.”

The last few lines of the preceding passage seem to me most appropriately to enunciate the main proposition to which I am about to address myself—namely, that strong arguments for regulating and ameliorating the physical condition of prostitutes are to be deduced from consideration, not of their temporal and bodily comfort, but of their future amendment and spiritual welfare, as well as of the interests of their frequenters and of posterity.

The whole subject having been so unpopular, and the mere allusion to it virtually tabooed, even in administrative circles, perhaps from men's nervous reluctance to admit acquaintance with it, only half-formed opinions prevail among the most enlightened official men, and extremely erroneous ones among the general public. This is particularly noticeable with respect to the extent of the class, and the progress, effects upon society, and social future of its members; and I shall endeavour, in succeeding chapters, to supply materials for an amended judgment.

CHAPTER III.

EXTENT OF PROSTITUTION.

I HAD better obviate the possibility of misapprehension by stating, *in limine*, that I am one of those who look upon prostitution as an inevitable attendant upon civilized, and especially closely-packed, population. When all is said and done, it is, and I believe ever will be, ineradicable. Whether, like those of disease and crime, its ravages may not be modified by unceasing watchfulness—whether it may not be the duty of the executive, as a French writer suggests, to treat it as they do such ordinary nuisances as drains, sewers, and so forth, by diminishing its inconvenience to the senses, and, in fact, rendering its presence as little noticeable as possible, it will be my business to inquire in a future chapter. At present I shall offer as complete a survey of that portion of it which stalks abroad, *tête levée*, in this metropolis, as the data at any English writer's disposal admit of, and a few figures relating to foreign cities, drawn from the only reliable sources.

The number of prostitutes in London has been variously estimated, according to the opportunities, credulity, or religious fervour of observers, and the width of interpretation they have put upon the word. To attempt to reconcile or construct tables upon those I have met with would be a hopeless task. I can merely give a few of the more moderate that have been handed down by my predecessors. Mr. Colquhoun, at that time magistrate at the Thames Police Court, rated them at 50,000 some sixty years ago. The Bishop of Exeter spoke of them as reaching 80,000; Mr. Talbot, secretary of a society for the protection of young females, made the same estimate. The returns on the constabulary force presented to Parliament in 1839, furnished an estimate of 6371—viz., 3732 “known to the police as kept by the proprietors of brothels,” and 2639 as resident in lodgings of their own, and dependent on prostitution alone for a livelihood. It was estimated by the Home authorities, in 1841, that the corresponding total was 9409—which, I need hardly point out, does not include the vast numbers who regularly or occasionally abandon themselves, but in a less open manner.

I am indebted to the courtesy of Sir Richard Mayne, the Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, and the good offices of Mr. Yardley, of the same department, for the subjoined return, as well as for that of 1837 (made up in 1841).

Return of the number of Brothels and Prostitutes within the Metropolitan Police District, as nearly as can be ascertained at this date (May 20th, 1857).

Division.	Number of brothels.					Number of prostitutes.			
	Where prostitutes are kept.	Where prostitutes lodge.	Where prostitutes resort.	Total.	Total returned in 1844.	Well dressed, living in brothels.	Well dressed, walking the streets.	Low, infesting low neighbourhoods.	Total.
A	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
B	—	135	18	153	181	16	144	364	524
C	14	92	46	152	83	168	150	—	318
D	10	113	16	139	93	49	188	289	526
E	30	110	54	194	266	74	85	387	546
F	26	—	19	45	181	60	120	300	480
G	3	77	72	152	360	26	165	158	349
H	209	217	45	471	289	132	420	1251	1803
K	—	402	17	419	882	13	435	517	965
L	—	184	193	377	275	108	329	365	802
M	12	138	28	178	178	13	71	583	667
N	53	98	34	185	152	87	142	216	445
P	3	33	29	65	56	63	67	98	228
R	46	66	36	148	122	69	116	216	401
S	—	52	36	88	96	8	90	133	231
T	—	12	—	12	107	—	12	94	106
V	4	37	6	47	4	35	82	92	209
Total	410	1766	649	2825	3325	921	2616	5063	8600
Do. 1841	933	1544	848	3325	—	2071	1994	5344	9409

- A. Whitehall, the Parks, Palaces, Government Offices.
- B. Westminster, Brompton, Pimlico, part of Chelsea.
- C. St. James's, Regent-street, Soho, Leicester-square.
- D. Marylebone, Paddington, St. John's Wood.
- E. Between Oxford-street, Portland-place, New-road, and Gray's-inn-lane.
- F. Covent Garden, Drury-lane, St. Giles's.
- G. Clerkenwell, Pentonville, City-road, Shoreditch.
- H. Spitalfields, Houndsditch, Whitechapel, Ratchiff.
- K. Bethnal-green, Mile End, and from Shadwell to Blackwall.
- L. Lambeth and Blackfriars, including Waterloo-road, &c.
- M. Southwark, Bermondsey, Rotherhithe.
- N. Islington, Hackney, Homerton, &c.
- P. Camberwell, Walworth, part of Peckham.
- R. Deptford, Greenwich, and neighbourhood.
- S. Kilburn, Portland, Kentish and Camden Towns to Cattle Market.
- T. Kensington, Hammersmith, North End, Fulham.
- V. Walham-green, Fulham, Chelsea, Cremorne.

The headings of the foregoing table demand a few explanatory observations. It is, in the first place, desirable that the reader should understand the distinction between three classes of houses, termed by the police, brothels. The first, or "houses in which prostitutes are kept," are those whose proprietors overtly devote their establishments to the

lodging, and sometimes boarding, of prostitutes, and prostitutes only. At first sight it might appear that, by the phrase employed, were indicated houses in which prostitutes are harboured, fed, and clothed at the cost of speculators, who derive a revenue from the farm of their persons. Such is, however, not the intention of the framers of the document. The houses last mentioned are, doubtless, included in this first column, but are not now sufficiently numerous to form a separate class.

By "houses in which prostitutes lodge," the reader must understand those in which one or two prostitutes occupy private apartments, generally with, though perhaps in rare cases without, the connivance of the proprietor. It often occurs, it must be remembered, that females of no virtue are so desirous of preserving the appearance of it before those among whom they reside, that they will not introduce their paramours to their apartments; but both they and their domicile, being generally known to the police, both figure on the return. "Houses to which prostitutes resort" represents night houses—the brothels devoted to casual entertainment of these women and their frequenters, and the coffee-shops and supper-shops which they haunt.

The "well-dressed, living in lodgings" prostitute is supposed to be the female who, though to all intents and purposes common, extending her pursuit of acquaintances over the town at large, or limiting it to the places of public recreation, eschews absolute "street-walking."

The "well-dressed, walking the streets" is the prostitute errant, or absolute street-walker, who plies in the open thoroughfare and there only, restricting herself generally to a definite parade, whereon she may always be found by her friends, and hence becomes, of course, "perfectly well known to the police."

The "low prostitute, infesting low neighbourhoods," is a phrase which speaks for itself. The police have not attempted to include—in fact, could not have justly included, I might almost say—the unnumbered prostitutes, whose appearance in the streets as such never takes place—who are not seen abroad at unseemly hours—who are reserved in manners, quiet and unobtrusive in their houses or lodgings, and whose general conduct is such that the most vigilant of constables could have no pretence for claiming to be officially aware of their existence or pursuits.

The return gives, after all, but a faint idea of the grand total of prostitution, though it may be received as a conscientious approximation to the number of street-walkers. The reader, who will, no doubt, observe that the numbers returned as "well dressed, walking the streets," in the C Division, which comprehends the Haymarket and Regent-street, figure as 150 only, may very naturally be disposed to challenge the accuracy of a report from his own personal experience of the circulating harlotry of that district. When I suggested this to Mr. Hannant, the obliging superintendent at Vine-street, whom I have to thank for his lucid answers to my queries, he informed me that he had, in the first instance, returned the number of women in his division as 500; but, on an intimation from head-quarters that he was to take no account of non-resident floating prostitution which surrounded him, his total was at once reduced to 150. The motive which governed this direction is obvious. The authorities in Scotland-yard were of opinion, of course, that were the habitual presence of a woman, and not her domicile, in a

particular division, to govern her ascription to it, half the prostitutes in the metropolis might be returned as of the parish of St. James's, and a false appearance of morality, perhaps, be thrown over other quarters.

Inspector Lester, of the C Division, informed me, in answer to my statement that with a friend I had counted 185 in the course of a walk home from the Opera to Portland-place, that he believed, from frequent observations, that in the limited space of the Haymarket alone, after the closure of the Casinos, there might be as many as 50 on each side of that thoroughfare at one time in movement, and at the same moment more than 200 might be estimated to be in the houses about the neighbourhood taking refreshment.

Were there any possibility of reckoning all those in London who would come within the definition of prostitutes, which, for the sake of the argument I adopted in the last chapter, I am inclined to think that the estimates of the boldest who have preceded me would be thrown into the shade. A figure or two from the census tables may furnish material for more thought on this head than would be due to a wilderness of random conjectures.

In the year 1851, 42,000 children were born alive in England and Wales upon a total of 2,449,669 unmarried women, among whom widows were included for the purposes of calculation, between the ages of fifteen and fifty-five, or 1·7 per cent. Each of these mothers has taken the first step in prostitution; and, conceding to each the trifling expectation of five years of unreformed life, we shall find that 210,000, or one in twelve, of the unmarried females in the country above the age of puberty have strayed from the path of virtue. This approximation may be objected to as erroneous, inasmuch as one woman may have two, three, or four illegitimate children; but this is balanced by the undoubted fact that an enormous number of illicit connexions are unfruitful, or result in premature or unregistered births.

The Government commentator upon the Census argues from the above figures, that if as many unmarried women are living irregularly to every child born out of wedlock, as there are *wives to every child* born in wedlock—viz., 1000 to 212—then 186,920, or 1 in 13, of the unmarried women must be living so as to contribute as much to the births as an equal number of married women.

The registered births in 1851, out of 212,293 unmarried women in London, were 3203. The application of the first of the above formulæ gives 16,331, and of the second, 15,000 as the irregular indigenous connexions of this city, but affords no guide to the extent of its *common* prostitution. I have tried an approximation of the latter from the above figures; but seeing that each registration need not imply a new connexion,—that untold seductions are concealed by infertility, abortion, or still-birth,—and that London is the centre to which much of the country prostitution converges,—I am compelled in conscience to give up the attempt.

The extreme youth of the junior portion of the "street-walkers" is a remarkable feature of London prostitution, and has been the subject of much comment by foreign travellers who have published their impressions of social London. Certain quarters of the town are positively infested by juvenile offenders, whose effrontery is more intolerably disgusting than that of their elder sisters. It is true, these young things spring from the lowest dregs of the population; and, from what I can

learn of their habits, their seduction—if seduction it can be called—has been effected, with their own consent, by boys no older than themselves, and is an all but natural consequence of promiscuous herding, that main-spring of corruption among our lower orders. That such as these are generally the victims of panders and old *débauchées* is as untrue as many of the wretched fallacies set about by some who write fictions about social matters in the guise of facts; but whatever the prime cause of their appearance in the streets as prostitutes, it is none the less strange and sad—none the less worth amending, that the London poor should furnish, and London immorality should maintain, so many of these half-fledged nurselings, who take to prostitution, as do their brothers of the same age to thieving and other evil courses, for a bare subsistence.

Mr. Tait, a writer on prostitution in Edinburgh, whose estimates I receive with every respect, but at the same time with considerable reserve, informs us that in that city they number about 800, or nearly 1 to every 80 of the adult male population. In London he considers they are as 1 to 60; in Paris, as 1 to 15; and in New York, as 1 to 15. The manner of these calculations is as follows: One-half of the population of each place is supposed to be males, of whom one-third are thrown aside as too young or too old for the exercise of the generative functions. The remainder is then divided by the alleged number of public women in each community—namely, in Edinburgh, 800; in London, 8000; in Paris, 18,000; and in New York, 10,000. It appears that the above estimate for London is not far short of the mark, the number of recognised women being about 8600; but the number of males, of twenty years of age and upwards, being close upon 700,000 (632,545 in 1851), we should arrive at the proportion, for London, of one prostitute-overt to every 81 (not every 60) adult males.* It will be observed, also, that in attributing 8000 public women to London and 18,000 to Paris, this writer has not allowed for the enormous clandestinity of our own capital, while he has more than quadrupled the French official returns, I presume, on that account.

In Paris, in 1854, among a population numbering 1,500,000 persons, there were 4206 registered “filles publiques,” that is to say, one overt prostitute to 356 inhabitants, over and above the unnumbered clandestine ones, who are variously estimated at 20,000,† 40,000, 50,000, and 60,000.

In Hamburg (population within the walls 120,000), there were, in 1846, only 500 registered public women, or 1 to every 240 inhabitants; but I have seen no estimate of the clandestinaires of the place.

The population of Brussels is about 270,000, and the number of females borne upon the books of the Moral and Sanitary Police is 630. That capital would appear pure indeed, were the relation of these numbers to be taken as an index of morality; but it will appear hereafter that this test is fallacious.

In Berlin, we are told by Dr. Holland that, in 1849, “the number of prostitutes in brothels was 225, and of women under the superintendence of the police 545; total, 770; and taking the male population above sixteen years of age as 153,802, there would be 201 males to every such female. This gives no clue to the extent of clandestine prostitution; but I find that, in a report of the Berlin police of 1849, the total number of loose women of all classes of society was estimated at 10,000.‡

* The single males are but 196,857 † See p. 75. ‡ Dr. Behrend inclines to 8000.

CHAPTER IV.

CAUSES OF PROSTITUTION.

I WILL now touch upon most briefly—because I believe no part of the subject has been so thoroughly mastered by the public—the well-known fruitful causes which induce women, for money or other consideration, to resign their persons to prostitution.

Every one now, I believe, admits that uncontrollable sexual desires of her own play but a little part in inducing profligacy of the female. Strong passions, save in exceptional cases, at certain times, and in advanced stages of dissipation, as little disturb the economy of the human as they do that of the animal female. How beautifully is this alluded to in the following passage from the “Westminster Review :”—

“We believe we shall be borne out by the observation of all who have inquired much into the antecedents of this unfortunate class of women—those, at least, who have not sprung from the *very* low, or the actually vicious sections of the community—in stating that a vast proportion of those who, after passing through the career of kept mistresses, ultimately come upon the town, fall in the first instance from a mere exaggeration and perversion of one of the best qualities of a woman’s heart. They yield to desires in which they do not share, from a weak generosity which cannot refuse anything to the passionate entreaties of the man they love. There is in the warm fond heart of woman a strange and sublime unselfishness, which men too commonly discover only to profit by,—a positive love of self-sacrifice,—an active, so to speak, an *aggressive* desire to show their affection, by giving up to those who have won it something they hold very dear. It is an unreasoning and dangerous yearning of the spirit, precisely analogous to that which prompts the surrenders and self-tortures of the religious devotee. Both seek to prove their devotion to the idol they have enshrined, by casting down before his altar their richest and most cherished treasures. ‘This is no romantic or over-coloured picture; those who deem it so have not known the better portion of the sex, or do not deserve to have known them.’”*

It has been, of course, suggested, over and over again, that education and religion would be very efficacious to control the male sexual feelings. But, unfortunately, as the churchman, the lawyer, and the statesman too well know, these powerful agents influence very slightly the vast number of men who believe the former to be bounded by the alphabet, and never heard of the latter at all; and, however much to be deplored, it is no less true, that myriads, far removed from the less blameable category of

* July, 1850.

the ignorant and the outcast, not alone neglect to curb, but do spur and flog, their passions, alike heedless of religion and reason.

Such are the males, or rather, such are a huge proportion of the rolling population of great modern towns; and when the female, with her own peculiar classes and degrees of instinct, enters into loose promiscuous intercourse and free companionship with them, the loss of virtue is no more surprising than sparks from flint and steel. If I seek to number the operative causes other than passion of the woman, I am met on the very threshold of the task by vanity, vanity, and then vanity,—for what but this are love of dress and admiration, and what sacrifices will not tens of thousands of the uneducated make to gain these? How near the brink of ruin thousands of the highly taught will flutter in the same pursuit, until some fall, it is not my province to tell. Then comes want of occupation, miserable want of thought—then sad hard times, low wages, and starvation. On these, hear Mayhew, than whom no more sympathizing or instructed writer has approached the subject, and whom I would rather quote with thanks than plunder without acknowledgment:—

“During the course of my investigation into the condition of those who are dependent upon their needle for their support, I had been so repeatedly assured that the young girls were mostly compelled to resort to prostitution to eke out their subsistence, that I was anxious to test the truth of the statement. I had seen much want, but I had no idea of the intensity of the privations suffered by the needlewomen of London until I came to inquire into this part of the subject. But the poor creatures shall speak for themselves. I should inform the reader, however, that I have made inquiries into the truth of the almost incredible statements here given, and I can in most of the particulars at least vouch for the truth of the statement. Indeed, in one instance—that of the last case here recorded—I travelled nearly ten miles in order to obtain the character of the young woman. The first case is that of a good-looking girl. Her story is as follows:—

“I make moleskin trousers. I get 7*d.* and 8*d.* per pair. I can do two pairs in a day, and twelve, when there is full employment, in a week. But some weeks I have no work at all. I work from six in the morning to ten at night; that is what I call my day's work. When I am fully employed I get from 7*s.* to 8*s.* a week. My expenses out of that for twist, thread, and candles are about 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, leaving me about 6*s.* a week clear. But there's coals to pay for out of this, and that's at the least 6*d.* more; so 5*s.* 6*d.* is the very outside of what I earn when I'm in full work. Taking one week with another, all the year round, I don't make above 3*s.* clear money each week. I don't work at any other kind of slop work. The trousers work is held to be the best paid of all. I give 1*s.* a week rent. My father died when I was five years of age. My mother is a widow, upwards of sixty-six years of age, and seldom has a day's work. Generally once in the week she is employed pot-scouring—that is, cleaning publicans' pots. She is paid 4*d.* a dozen for that, and does about four dozen and a half, so that she gets about 1*s.* 6*d.* in the day by it. For the rest she is dependent upon me. I am twenty years of age the 25th of this month. We earn together, to keep the two of us, from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* each week. Out of this we have

to pay 1s. rent, and there remains 3s. 6d. to 4s. to find us both in food and clothing. It is of course impossible for us to live upon it, and the consequence is, I am obligated to go a bad way. I have been three years working at slop work. *I was virtuous when I first went to work, and I remained so till this last twelvemonth. I struggled very hard to keep myself chaste, but I found that I couldn't get food and clothing for myself and mother;* so I took to live with a young man. He is turned twenty. He is a tinman. He did promise to marry me, but his sister made mischief between me and him; so that parted us. I have not seen him now for about six months, and I can't say whether he will keep his promise or not. I am now pregnant by him, and expect to be confined in two months' time. He knows of my situation, and so does my mother. My mother believed me to be married to him. She knows otherwise now. I was very fond of him, and had known him for two years before he seduced me. He could make 14s. a week. He told me if I came to live with him he'd take care I shouldn't want, and both mother and me had been very bad off before. He said, too, he'd make me his lawful wife, *but I hardly cared so long as I could get food for myself and mother.* Many young girls at the shop advised me to go wrong. They told me how comfortable they was off; they said they could get plenty to eat and drink, and good clothes. There isn't one young girl as can get her living by slop work. I am satisfied there is not one young girl that works at slop work that is virtuous, and there are some thousands in the trade. They may do very well if they have got mothers and fathers to find them a home and food, and to let them have what they earn for clothes; then they may be virtuous, but not without. I have heard of numbers who have gone from slop-work to the streets altogether for a living, and I shall be obligated to do the same thing myself, unless something better turns up for me. If I was never allowed to speak no more, it was the little money I got by my labour that caused me to go wrong. Could I have honestly earned enough to have subsisted upon, to find me in proper food and clothing, such as is necessary, I should not have gone astray,—no, never! As it was, I fought against it as long as I could—that I did—to the last. I know how horrible all this is. It would have been much better for me to have subsisted upon a dry crust and water rather than be as I am now. But no one knows the temptations of us poor girls in want. Gentlefolks can never understand it. If I had been born a lady, it wouldn't have been very hard to have acted like one. To be poor and to be honest, especially with young girls, is the hardest struggle of all. There isn't one in a thousand that can get the better of it. I am ready to say again, that it was want, and nothing more, that made me transgress. If I had been better paid I should have done better. Young as I am, my life is a curse to me. If the Almighty would please to take me before my child is born, I should die happy.

"The next were two 'trousers hands,' working for the same piece-mistress. I was assured by the woman by whom they were employed, and whom I visited expressly to make inquiries into the matter, that they were both hard-working and sober individuals. The first of these made the following extraordinary statement:—

"'I work at slop trousers, moleskin and cord—no cloth. We make

about 4s. a week, but we must work till nine or ten o'clock every night for that. We never make more than 4s., and very often less. If you go of an errand, or want a bit of bread, you lose time; and sometimes the work comes out harder—it's more stubborn, and takes more time. I've known it like a bit of board. I make, I should say, taking one week with another, about 3s. 4d. a week. The sweater finds us our lodging; but we has to find our candles out of what we make, and they cost us about 1d. each evening, or, I should say, 5d. a week. I earn clear just upon 3s.; that's about it. I find it very hard indeed to live upon that. If we fall ill we're turned off. The sweater won't keep us with her not the second day. I have been married. My husband has been dead seven year. I wish he wasn't. I have no children alive. I have buried three. I had two children alive when my husband died. The youngest was five and the other was seven. My husband was a soap-maker. He got 1l. a week. I worked at the slop trade while he was alive. Our weekly earnings—his and mine together—was about 26s. The slop trade was better paid then than now, and what's more, I had the work on my own account. I was very happy and comfortable while he lived.' [Here the woman burst out crying, and wiped her eyes with the corner of her old rusty shawl.] 'I was always true to him while he was alive, so help me God! After his death I was penniless, with two young children. The only means I had of keeping myself and little ones was by the slop work; and that brought me in about 5s. 6d. a week first hand. That was to keep me and my two boys. When my eldest boy died—and that was two year after his father—I couldn't afford to bury him. My sister paid for the funeral. I was very thankful to the Almighty when he took him from me, for I had not sufficient to feed him. He died of scarlatina. My second boy has only been dead five months. He died of the hooping-cough. I loved him as I did my life; but I was glad he was taken from me, for I know he's better now than I could have done for him. He could but have been brought up in the worst kind of poverty by me, and God only knows what might have become of him if he had lived. My security died five year ago, and then the house that I had been used to work for refused to give me any more, so I was obligated to work for a sweater, and I have done so ever since. This was a heavy blow to me. I was getting about 5s. 6d. a week before then. The trousers was better paid for at that time besides, and when I was obligated to work second-handed I couldn't get more than 4s. One of my boys was alive at this time, and we really could not live upon the money. I applied to the parish, and they wanted me to go into the house; but I knew if I did so, they'd take my boy from me, and I'd suffer anything first. *At times I was so badly off, me and my boy, that I was forced to resort to prostitution to keep us from starving.* It was not until after my security died that I did this. Before that we could just live by my labour, but afterwards it was impossible for me to get food and clothing for myself and child out of 4s. a week, which was all I could earn; so I was obligated to get a little more money in a way that I blush to mention to you. Up to the time of the death of my security, I can swear, before God, I was an honest woman; and had the price I was paid for my labour been such that I could get a living by it, I would never have resorted to the streets for money. I am sorry to say there is

too many persons like me in the trade—*hundreds of married and single doing the same as I do, for the same reason.*”

Continuing this branch of the inquiry, Mr. Mayhew gives the statement of the second trousers hand, which was to the same effect, and ran as follows:—

“‘I work at the slop, make trousers—moleskin and cord—any sort of plain work. I work at the same place as the other woman works at, and for the same prices. I earn, like her, taking one week with another, about 3s. 4d., and, taking off the candles, about 3s. every week. I have been married, but my husband’s been dead eleven years. I have had two children, but I’ve buried them. When he died he left me penniless, with a baby to keep. I was an honest woman up to the time of my husband’s death. I never did him wrong. I can lay my hand on my heart and say so. But since then the world has drove me about so, and poverty and trouble has forced me to do what I never did before. I do the best I can with what little money I earn, *and the rest I am obligated to go to the streets for.* That is true, though I says it as shouldn’t. *I can’t get a rag to wear without flying to prostitution for it.* My wages will barely find me in food. Indeed, I eat more than I earn, and I am obligated to make up my money in other ways. I know a great many women who are situated in the same way as I am. We pretty well all share one fate in that respect—with the exception of those that’s got husbands to keep them. The young and middle-aged all do the same, as far as I know. There’s good and bad in all; but with the most of ’em I’m sure they’re drove to it—yes, that they are. I have frequently heard them regret that they are forced to go to the streets to make out their living.’

“The story which follows is perhaps one of the most tragic and touching romances ever read. I must confess, that to myself the mental and bodily agony of the poor Magdalen who related it, was quite overpowering. She was a tall, fine-grown girl, with remarkably regular features. She told her tale with her face hidden in her hands, and sobbing so loud that it was with difficulty I could catch her words. As she held her hands before her eyes, I could see the tears oozing between her fingers. Indeed, I never remember to have witnessed such intense grief. Her statement was of so startling a nature, that I felt it due to the public to inquire into the character of the girl. Though it was late at night, and the gentleman who had brought the case to me assured me that he himself was able to corroborate almost every word of the girl’s story, still I felt that I should not be doing my duty to the office that had been entrusted to me, if I allowed so pathetic and romantic a statement to go forth without using every means to test the truth of what I had heard. Accordingly, being informed that the girl was in service, I made the best of my way, not only to her present master, but also to the one she had left but a few months previous. The gentleman who had brought her to me willingly accompanied me thither. One of the parties lived at the east end of London, the other in the extreme suburbs of London. The result was well worth the journey. Both persons spoke in the highest terms of the girl’s honesty, sobriety, and industry, and of her virtue in particular.

“With this preamble let me proceed to tell her story in her own touching words:—

“‘I used to work at slop work—at the shirt work—the fine full-fronted white shirts; I got $2\frac{1}{4}d.$ each for ’em. There were six button-holes, four rows of stitching in the front, and the collars and wristbands stitched as well. By working from five o’clock in the morning till midnight each night, I might be able to do seven in the week. These would bring me in $17\frac{1}{2}d.$ for my whole week’s labour. Out of this the cotton must be taken, and that came to $2d.$ every week, and so left me $15\frac{1}{2}d.$ to pay rent and living and buy candles with. I was single, and received some little help from my friends; still it was impossible for me to live. *I was forced to go out of a night to make out my living. I had a child, and it used to cry for food; so, as I could not get a living for him myself by my needle, I went into the streets, and made out a living that way.* Sometimes there was no work for me, and then I was forced to depend entirely upon the streets for my food. *On my soul, I went to the streets solely to get a living for myself and child.* If I had been able to get it otherwise, I would not have done so. I am the daughter of a minister of the Gospel. *My father was an Independent preacher, and I pledge my word, solemnly and sacredly, that it was the low price paid for my labour that drove me to prostitution.* I often struggled against it, and many times have I taken my child into the streets to beg, rather than I would bring shame upon myself and it any longer. I have made pincushions and fancy articles—such as I could manage to scrape together—and taken them to the streets to sell, so that I might get an honest living, but I couldn’t. Sometimes I should be out all night in the rain, and sell nothing at all, me and my child together; and when we didn’t get anything that way, we used to sit in a shed, for I was too fatigued with my baby to stand, and I was so poor I couldn’t have even a night’s lodging upon credit. One night in the depth of winter his legs froze to my side. We sat down on the step of a door. I was trying to make my way to the workhouse, but was so weak I couldn’t get on any further. The snow was over my shoes. It had been snowing all day, and me and my boy out in it. We hadn’t tasted any food since the morning before, and that I got in another person’s name. I was driven by positive starvation to say that they sent me, when they did no such thing. All this time I was struggling to give up prostitution. I had many offers, but I refused them all. I had sworn to myself that I would keep from that mode of life for my boy’s sake. A lady saw me sitting on the door-step, and took me into her house, and rubbed my child’s legs with brandy. She gave us some food, both my child and me, but I was so far gone I couldn’t eat. I got to the workhouse that night. I told them we were starving, but they refused to admit us without an order; so *I went back to prostitution again for another month.* I then made from $3s.$ to $4s.$ a week, and from that time I gave up prostitution. For the sake of my child I should not like my name to be known; but for the sake of other young girls, I can and will solemnly state, that it was the smallness of the price *I got for my labour that drove me to prostitution as a means of living. In my heart I hated it; my whole nature rebelled at it, and nobody but God knows how I struggled to give it up.* I was only able to do so by getting work at something that was better paid. Had I remained at shirt-making, I must have been a prostitute to this day. I have taken my gown off my back and pledged it, and gone in my petticoat—I had but one—rather than take to the streets again; but it was all in vain.’

"I now come to the second test that was adopted in order to verify my conclusions. This was the convening of such a number of needle-women and slop-workers as would enable me to arrive at a correct *average* as to the earnings of the class. I was particularly anxious to do this, not only with regard to the more respectable portion of the operatives, but also with reference to those who, I have been given to understand, resorted to prostitution in order to eke out their subsistence. I consulted a friend who is well acquainted with the habits and feelings of the slop-workers, as to the possibility of gathering together a number of women who would be willing to state that they had been forced to take to the streets on account of the low prices for their work. He told me he was afraid, from the shame of their mode of life becoming known, it would be almost impossible to collect together a *number* of females who would be ready to say as much *publicly*. However, it was decided that at least the experiment should be made, and that everything should be done to assure the parties of the strict privacy of the assembly. It was arranged that the gentleman and myself should be the only male persons visible on the occasion, and that the place of meeting should be as dimly lighted as possible, so that they could scarcely see or be seen by one another, or by us. Cards of admission were issued and distributed as privately as possible, and, to my friend's astonishment, as many as twenty-five came, on the evening named, to the appointed place—intent upon making known the sorrows and sufferings that had driven them to fly to the streets, in order to get the bread which the wretched prices paid for their labour would not permit them to obtain. Never in all history was such a sight seen, or such tales heard. There, in the dim haze of the large bare room in which they met, sat women and girls, some with babies suckling at their breasts—others in rags—and even these borrowed, in order that they might come and tell their misery to the world. I have witnessed many a scene of sorrow lately; I have heard stories that have unmanned me; but never till last Wednesday had I heard or seen anything so solemn, so terrible as this. If ever eloquence was listened to, it was in the outpourings of those poor lorn mothers' hearts for their base-born little ones, as each told her woes and struggles, and published her shame amid the convulsive sobs of the others—nay, all present. Behind a screen, removed from sight, so as not to wound the modesty of the women—who were nevertheless aware of their presence—sat two reporters from this journal, to take down *verbatim* the confessions and declarations of those assembled, and to them I am indebted for the following report of the statements made at the meeting."

"They were unanimous in declaring that a large number in the trade—probably one-fourth of the whole, or one-half of those who had no husband or parent to support them—resorted to the streets to eke out a living. Accordingly, assuming the government returns to be correct, and that there are upwards of eleven thousand females under twenty, living by needle and slop-work, the numerical amount of prostitution becomes awful to contemplate."

Another and fertile cause has been the early herding together of the sexes (no other word is applicable), through the want of sufficient house accommodation for the poor. (As to recent improvement, see p. 145). I again quote Mr. Mayhew's letter to the "Morning Chronicle"—

"Let us consider, for a moment, the progress of a family amongst them. A man and woman intermarry, and take a cottage. In eight cases out of ten it is a cottage with but two rooms. For a time, so far as room at least is concerned, this answers their purpose; but they take it, not because it is at the time sufficiently spacious for them, but because they could not procure a more roomy dwelling, even did they desire it. In this they pass with tolerable comfort, considering their notions of what comfort is, the first period of married life. But, by-and-by they have children, and the family increases until, in the course of a few years, they number perhaps from eight to ten individuals. But all this time there has been no increase to their household accommodation. As at first, so to the very last, there is but the one sleeping room. As the family increases additional beds are crammed into this apartment, until at last it is so filled with them that there is scarcely room left to move between them. As already mentioned, I have known instances in which they had to crawl over each other to get to their beds. So long as the children are very young, the only evil connected with this is the physical one arising from crowding so many people together in what is generally a dingy, frequently a damp, and invariably an ill-ventilated apartment. But years steal on, and the family continues thus bedded together. Some of its members may yet be in their infancy, but other of both sexes have crossed the line of puberty. But there they are, still together in the same room—the father and mother, the sons and the daughters—young men, young women, and children. Cousins, too, of both sexes, are often thrown together into the same room, and not unfrequently into the same bed. I have also known of cases in which uncles slept in the same room with their grown-up nieces, and newly-married couples occupied the same chamber with those long married, and with those marriageable but unmarried. A case also came to my notice—already alluded to in connexion with another branch of the subject—in which two sisters, who were married on the same day, occupied adjoining rooms, in the same hut, with nothing but a thin board partition, which did not reach the ceiling, between the two rooms, and a door in the partition which only partly filled up the doorway. For years back, in these same two rooms, have slept twelve people, of both sexes and all ages. Sometimes, when there is but one room, a praiseworthy effort is made for the conservation of decency. But the hanging up of a piece of tattered cloth between the beds—which is generally all that is done in this respect, and even that but seldom—is but a poor set-off to the fact that a family, which, in common decency, should, as regards sleeping accommodations, be separated at least into three divisions, occupy, night after night, but one and the same chamber. This is a frightful position for them to be in when an infectious or epidemic disease enters their abode. But this, important though it be, is the least important consideration connected with their circumstances. That which is most so is the effect produced by them upon their habits and morals. In the illicit intercourse to which such a position frequently gives rise, it is not always that the tie of blood is respected. Certain it is that, when the relationship is even but one degree removed from that of brother and sister, that tie is frequently overlooked. And when the circumstances do not lead to such horrible consequences, the mind, par-

ticularly of the female, is wholly divested of that sense of delicacy and shame which, so long as they are preserved, are the chief safeguards of her chastity. She therefore falls an early and an easy prey to the temptations which beset her beyond the immediate circle of her family. People in the other spheres of life are but little aware of the extent to which this precocious demoralization of the female amongst the lower orders in the country has proceeded. But how could it be otherwise? The philanthropist may exert himself in their behalf, the moralist may inculcate even the worldly advantages of a better course of life, and the minister of religion may warn them of the eternal penalties which they are incurring; but there is an instructor constantly at work more potent than them all, an instructor in mischief, of which they must get rid ere they make any real progress in their laudable efforts—and that is, *the single bed-chamber in the two-roomed cottage.*”

Now what says this same observer upon the low lodging-house accommodation in London and other large towns:—

“A good-looking girl of sixteen gave me the following awful statement. Her hands were swollen with cold:

“I am an orphan. When I was ten I was sent to service as maid-of-all-work, in a small tradesman’s family. It was a hard place, and my mistress used me very cruelly, beating me often. When I had been in place three weeks, my mother died; my father having died twelve months before. I stood my mistress’s ill treatment for about six months. She beat me with sticks as well as with her hands. I was black and blue, and at last I ran away. I got to Mrs. —, a low lodging-house. I didn’t know before that there was such a place. I heard of it from some girls at the Glasshouse (baths and washhouses), where I went for shelter. I went with them to have a half-penny worth of coffee, and they took me to the lodging-house. I then had three shillings, and stayed about a month, and did nothing wrong, living on the three shillings and what I pawned my clothes for, as I got some pretty good things away with me. In the lodging-house I saw nothing but what was bad, and heard nothing but what was bad. I was laughed at, and was told to swear. They said, “Look at her for a d—d modest fool”—sometimes worse than that, until by degrees I got to be as bad as they were. During this time I used to see boys and girls from ten and twelve years old sleeping together, but understood nothing wrong. I had never heard of such places before I ran away. I can neither read or write. My mother was a good woman, and I wish I’d had her to run away to. I saw things between almost children that I can’t describe to you—very often I saw them, and that shocked me. At the month’s end, when I was beat out, I met with a young man of fifteen—I myself was going on to twelve years old—and he persuaded me to take up with him. I stayed with him three months in the same lodging-house, living with him as his wife, though we were mere children, and being true to him. At the three months’ end he was taken up for picking pockets, and got six months. I was sorry, for he was kind to me; though I was made ill through him; so I broke some windows in St. Paul’s Churchyard to get into prison to get cured. I had a month in the Comptor, and came out well. I was scolded very much in the Comptor, on account of the state I was in, being so young. I had 2s. 6d. given to me when I came out,

and was forced to go into the streets for a living. I continued walking the streets for three years, sometimes making a good deal of money, sometimes none, feasting one day and starving the next. The bigger girls could persuade me to do anything they liked with my money. I was never happy all the time, but I could get no character and could not get out of the life. I lodged all this time at a lodging-house in Kent-street. They were all thieves and bad girls. I have known between three and four dozen boys and girls sleep in one room. The beds were horrid filthy and full of vermin. There was very wicked carryings on. The boys, if any difference, was the worst. We lay packed on a full night, a dozen boys and girls squeezed into one bed. That was very often the case—some at the foot and some at the top—boys and girls all mixed. I can't go into all the particulars, but whatever could take place in words or acts between boys and girls did take place, and in the midst of the others. I am sorry to say I took part in these bad ways myself, but I wasn't so bad as some of the others. There was only a candle burning all night, but in summer it was light great part of the night. Some boys and girls slept without any clothes, and would dance about the room that way. I have seen them, and, wicked as I was, felt ashamed. I have seen two dozen capering about the room that way; some mere children—the boys generally the youngest. There were no men or women present. There were often fights. The deputy never interfered. This is carried on just the same as ever to this day, and is the same every night. I have heard young girls shout out to one another how often they had been obliged to go to the hospital, or the infirmary, or the workhouse. There was a great deal of boasting about what the boys and girls had stolen during the day. I have known boys and girls change their 'partners,' just for a night. At three years' end I stole a piece of beef from a butcher. I did it to get into prison. I was sick of the life I was leading, and didn't know how to get out of it. I had a month for stealing. When I got out I passed two days and a night in the streets doing nothing wrong, and then went and threatened to break Messrs. — windows again. I did that to get into prison again; for when I lay quiet of a night in prison I thought things over, and considered what a shocking life I was leading, and how my health might be ruined completely, and I thought I would stick to prison rather than go back to such a life. I got six months for threatening. When I got out I broke a lamp next morning for the same purpose, and had a fortnight. That was the last time I was in prison. I have since been leading the same life as I told you of for three years, and lodging at the same houses, and seeing the same goings on. I hate such a life now more than ever. I am willing to do any work that I can in washing and cleaning. Anybody may call in the day time at this house and have a halfpennyworth of coffee, and sit any length of time until evening. I have seen three dozen sitting there that way, all thieves and bad girls. There are no chairs, and only one form in front of the fire, on which a dozen can sit. The others sit on the floor all about the room, as near the fire as they can. Bad language goes on during the day, as I have told you it did during the night, and indecencies too, but nothing like so bad as at night. They talk about where there is good places to go and thieve. The missionaries call sometimes, but they're laughed at often

when they're talking, and always before the door's closed on them. If a decent girl goes there to get a ha'porth of coffee, seeing the board over the door, she is always shocked. Many a poor girl has been ruined in this house since I was, and boys have boasted about it. I never knew boy or girl do good, once get used there. Get used there, indeed, and you are life-ruined. I was an only child, and haven't a friend in the world. I have heard several girls say how they would like to get out of the life, and out of the place. From those I know, I think that cruel parents and mistresses cause many to be driven there. One lodging-house keeper, Mrs. —, goes out dressed respectable, and pawns any stolen property, or sells it at public-houses.'

"To show then the actual state of these lodging-houses from the testimony of one who has been long resident in them, I give the following statement. It was made to me by a man of superior education and intelligence (as the tone of his narrative fully shows), whom circumstances, which do not affect the object of my present letter, and therefore need not be detailed, had reduced from affluence to beggary, so that he was compelled to be the constant inmate of those places. All the other statements that I obtained on the subject—and they were numerous—were corroborative of his account to the very letter:—

"I have been familiar, unfortunately for me, with low lodging-houses, both in town and country, for more than ten years. I consider that, as to the conduct of these places, it is worse in London than in the country—while in the country the character of the keeper is worse than in London, although but a small difference can be noted. The worst I am acquainted with, though I haven't been in it lately, is in the neighbourhood of Drury-lane—this is the worst, both for filth and for the character of the lodgers. In the room where I slept, which was like a barn in size, the tiles were off the roof, and as there was no ceiling, I could see the blue sky from where I lay. That may be altered now. Here I slept in what was called the single men's room, and it was confined to men. In another part of the house was a room for married couples, as it was called; but of such apartments I can tell you more concerning other houses. For the bed with the view of the blue sky I paid 3*d*. If it rained there was no shelter. I have slept in a room in Brick-lane, Whitechapel, in which were fourteen beds. In the next bed to me, on the one side, was a man, his wife, and three children, and a man and his wife on the other. They were Irish people, and I believe the women were the men's wives—as the Irish women generally are. Of all the women that resort to these places, the Irish are far the best for chastity. All the beds were occupied, single men being mixed with the couples of the two sexes. The question is never asked, when a man and woman go to a lodging-house, if they are man and wife. All must pay before they go to bed, or be turned into the street. These beds were made—as all the low lodging-house beds are—of the worst cotton flocks, stuffed in coarse, strong canvas. There is a pair of sheets, a blanket, and a rug. I have known the bedding to be unchanged for three months; but that is not general. The beds are an average size. Dirt is the rule with them, and cleanliness the exception. They are all infested with vermin. I never met with an exception. No one is required to wash before going to bed in any of these places (except at

a very few, where a very dirty fellow would not be admitted), unless he has been walking on a wet day without shoes or stockings, and then he must bathe his feet. The people who slept in the room I am describing were chiefly young men, almost all accompanied by young females. I have seen girls of fifteen sleep with "their chaps"—in some places with youths of from sixteen to twenty. There is no objection to any boy or girl occupying a bed, even though the keeper knows that they were previously strangers to each other. The accommodation for purposes of decency is very bad in some places. A pail in the middle of the room, to which both sexes may resort, is a frequent arrangement. No delicacy or decency is ever observed. The women are, I think, worse than the men. If any one, possessing a sense of shame, says a word of rebuke, he is at once assailed, by the women in particular, with the coarsest words in the language. The Irish women are as bad as the others with respect to language; but I have known them keep themselves covered in bed when the other women were outraging modesty or decency. The Irish will sleep anywhere to save a halfpenny a night, if they have ever so much money.' [Here he stated certain gross acts common to lodging-houses, which cannot be detailed in print.] 'It is not uncommon for a boy or a man to take a girl out of the streets to these apartments. Some are the same as common brothels, women being taken in at all hours of the day or night. In most, however, they must stay all night as a married couple. In dressing or undressing there is no regard to decency; while disgusting blackguardism is often carried on in the conversation of the inmates. I have known decent people, those that are driven to such places from destitution, perhaps for the first time, shocked and disgusted at what they saw. I have seen a decent married pair so shocked and disgusted, that they have insisted on leaving the place, and have left it.'"

Although a large number of women fall victims as above, it cannot be denied that others early evince a natural indisposition to do work when they might obtain it, and may thus be said to court admission into the ranks of prostitution. That idleness and vanity are almost inevitable bequests from parent to child, is proved by the fact that the children of the numerous diseased prostitutes, consigned by the police to the St. Lazare Hospital in Paris, notwithstanding all the religious teachings of the Sisters of Charity, and the excellent secular education given them within the walls of that institution, where they are received as old as seven or eight years, almost invariably become prostitutes. The foundlings, or deserted children, oftentimes illegitimate, who crowd our workhouses, are in like manner a very fruitful source for the recruitment of the metropolitan pavé.

With the absolute neglect of children by parents, and the interminable scheming of lustful men, I may end the roll of causes which have operated in this direction since the dawn of civilization, and, singly or combined, will so continue, I presume, to operate for all time. I should not be doing my duty to the sex it is my aim to benefit, if I did not press into their service the following passage from my *cheval de bataille*, the "Westminster Review" article, which has, I believe, exhausted this part of the question, and for whose author I have no better way than this of expressing my admiration:—

“Many—and these are commonly the most innocent and the most wronged of all—are deceived by unreal marriages; and in these cases their culpability consists in the folly which confided in their lover to the extent of concealing their intention from their friends—in all cases a weak, and in most cases a blameable, concealment; but surely not one worthy of the fearful punishment which overtakes it. Many—far more than would generally be believed—fall from pure unknowingness. Their affections are engaged, their confidence secured; thinking no evil themselves, they permit caresses which in themselves, and to them, indicate no wrong, and are led on ignorantly and thoughtlessly from one familiarity to another, not conscious where those familiarities must inevitably end, till ultimate resistance becomes almost impossible; and they learn, when it is too late—what women can never learn too early, or impress too strongly on their minds—that a lover’s encroachments, to be repelled successfully, must be repelled and negatived at the very outset.”

CHAPTER V.

DISEASES THE RESULT OF PROSTITUTION.

I HAVE now to consider one or two of the most ordinary consequences of promiscuous intercourse. In passing through (as she generally does, whether rising or falling in the scale) this phase of her career, the prostitute almost inevitably contracts some form of the contagious (*vulgo* "infectious") diseases, which in medicine we term "venereal."* How these are passed from sex to sex and back again, *ad infinitum*, it were superfluous here to illustrate. I have treated at length elsewhere, under the head of specific disease, of the laws which seem to govern these complaints, and of the influences which favour their diffusion, and the reader will, I dare say, gladly dispense with the re-introduction of those topics here. I propose, however, in the following pages, to offer some idea of their importance, as being the first and foremost of the effects of prostitution coming under the notice of the surgeon.

If the hospitals of London preserved lists of all cases which come under their care, whether as in or out patients, their tabulation would be no difficult task, and I should be enabled to show the exact proportion which the venereal and its sub-classes bear to one another, and to the mass of disease. But in the absence of any such statistics, the reader will, I hope, be content with a few official, semi-official, and non-official figures I have been at some pains to collect, and will observe, by the way, how unprepared must be the profession itself, much more so the public, to deal comprehensively with the subject.

LONDON CIVIL HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

The following table gives the symptoms of twenty-nine female patients examined by Mr. Stanley, as candidates for admission into St. Bartholomew's Hospital, on Thursday the 12th of November, 1840 :—

1. Condylomata, the elevated form.
2. Condylomata, flattened, excoriated.
3. Tubercular eruption covering the whole body.
4. Condylomata, elevated, much excoriation around.
5. Ulceration of the buttock, very extensive.
6. Enormous excoriation of and around the genital organs.

* Venereal Diseases are affections more or less directly the consequence of sexual intercourse. They embrace two grand divisions—viz., "specific" and "non-specific." Under the former I include syphilis and its sequelæ; under the latter come gonorrhœa and its train of evils.

7. Chancres, excoriations, and large condyloma.
8. Condylomatous swelling, and phymosis of the præputium clitorides.
9. Tubercular eruption, sore (superficial) throat.
10. Condylomata.
11. Abscess in the clitoris.
12. Condylomata, open bubo (slight).
13. Tubercular eruption, condylomata, ulcerated.
14. Condylomata, superficial ulceration of the throat.
15. Superficial ulceration of the throat.
16. Excoriation of the genital organs, sore throat (superficial).
17. 1, Longitudinal fissure of the tongue, 2, bald patches.
18. Small tubercular eruption (universal).
19. Gonorrhœa, bubo in left groin.
20. Sores around the anus.
21. Gonorrhœa, excoriation very extensive.
22. Tubercular eruption, iritis, sore throat (superficial).
23. White phagedænic ulceration of the internal part of vulva (very severe).
24. Sores on the labium.
25. Raised condylomata around the anus (clean, without excoriation).
26. Large condylomata.
27. Condylomata, tubercular (red), eruption around the genital organs.
28. Condylomata, tubercular eruption.
29. Condylomata, between the toes, sore throat (superficial).

Twenty-four cases, classed as under, presented themselves to Mr. Lawrence, for admission into the same hospital, on Thursday the 26th of November, in the same year :—

1. Bubo, sore at the entrance of vagina.
2. Sores.
3. Condylomata, excoriation.
4. Itch, gonorrhœa, excoriation.
5. Suppurating bubo, gonorrhœa.
6. Warts, gonorrhœa.
7. Very large sores on thighs.
8. Two large sores on vulva, two buboes.
9. Gonorrhœa, excoriated tongue.
10. Excoriations around the anus.
11. Condylomata of the vulva (very red), two buboes.
12. Very large condylomata, excoriation of the throat.
13. Condylomata, itch, and a curious eruption.
14. A small sore on vulva, eruption on body, sore throat.
15. Discharge from vagina, raised condylomata.
16. Sores on the labium, perhaps primary.
17. Condylomata.
18. Eczema, itch, phagedænic sores.
19. Condylomata, excoriation very extensive.
20. Very large condylomata, white excoriation between toes, and on throat.
21. Condylomata, very extensive affection of tongue.
22. Condylomata.
23. Discharge from vagina, superficial ulceration.
24. Two buboes, condylomata.

Feeling the importance of presenting the experience of this hospital, which now, as in 1840, takes the lead of all others in the comprehensiveness of its relief, brought down to the present time, I availed myself of the politeness of Mr. Holmes Coote, who has favoured me with the following notes of applicants' cases. I may hereafter have occasion to allude to a fact which I will now state broadly—viz., that in no continental capital could such frightfully aggravated forms and complications of the venereal disease be found as present themselves, I

may say weekly, to the surgeons of St. Bartholomew's, in the generally very healthy metropolis of England. This indication of the severity which the complaint is permitted to attain, in a country whose climate would not favour it, was particularly commented upon by M. Ricord, when he inspected the hospitals of London with me a few years ago.

*Cases Examined for Admission into St. Bartholomew's Hospital
(June, 1857) by Mr. Holmes Coote.*

	Cases.
1. Gonorrhœa, simple	1
2. Gonorrhœa, with flattened and excoriated mucous tubercles	3
3. Superficial sores of the labia, discharge from the vagina	4
4. Ulcerated verruœ	2
5. Gonorrhœa, superficial ulceration of labia and nymphæ, œdema of the external organs... ..	3
6. Ulcerated bubo	2
7. Superficial ulceration of external organs, with discharge, and bubo in each groin	1
8. Groups of papulæ over the face, trunk, and limbs, upon an inflamed base, thickening of the mucous membrane of the tongue, inflammation and probable ulceration of the mucous membrane of the throat	1
9. Superficial ulceration of the tonsils and soft palate... ..	2
10. Primary sore, with indurated base the size of a shilling on the labium... ..	1
11. Mucous tubercles occupying the whole entrance of the vagina	1
12. Chronic discharge, ulceration on the os tinæ (speculum)	1

Thus proving that venereal disease presents the same features in London hospitals now that it did seventeen years ago, when the first table was compiled.

It so happens that when these notes were taken, the applicants were far less numerous than on the occasions above referred to. I am enabled to state, however, on the very best authority, that whatever progress modern surgery may have made against the intensity of venereal complaints, it has made none against their frequency.

In 1849, I made an analysis of the surgical out-patients of Messrs. Lloyd and Wormald, at that time assistant-surgeons to St. Bartholomew's Hospital. They amounted to 5327 during the year; of whom 2513, or nearly half, suffered from venereal diseases :—

	Venereal men.	Venereal women and children.	Total.
Mr. Lloyd's patients	1009	245	1254
Mr. Wormald's ditto	986	273	1259
Total	1995	518	2513

Hence it appears that about one in every five out-patients was a woman or a child.

In the "Medical Times" for 1854, page 587, I find in a report made by Mr. Coote, on his out-patients at St. Bartholomew's during four months, he states that out of 493, the whole number, 212 or 43 per cent. were venereal cases. Of this number there were 155 males and 57 females, which would seem to favour an approximate calculation, that one female infected on an average three males. The same gentleman, in his recent "Report on some important points of Syphilis," informs us that in St. Bartholomew's Hospital between 7000 and 8000 patients

of syphilis. Of these syphilitic cases, 35 were primary sores, and 39 constitutional affections. In the month of September there were, out of 81 patients, 34 cases of gonorrhœa, 23 cases of primary syphilis, and 29 of constitutional syphilis.

Royal Free Hospital.

As I was desirous of knowing the class of out-patients, and the proportion of venereal cases seeking the aid of an institution that really opens its doors and gives gratuitous advice to all comers, I gladly accepted the invitation of Mr. de Meric to see him treat his cases at the Royal Free Hospital, in March last (1857).

I spent three hours very profitably in observation of the male cases, my engagements not allowing me to wait and see the females. The results are shown in the following table, which is very simply constructed, as follows:—Divide a sheet of ruled foolscap paper into two equal columns. Appropriate one of these to the more usual forms of venereal diseases, written down in order; and the other to non-venereal affections *en masse*. As each patient is inspected, make a cross upon the proper line, and, when the consultation is over, you will have a tabulated view of the forms of disease it has presented to your notice.

*Mr. de Meric's Out-Patients (Males) at the Royal Free Hospital,
March 3rd, 1857.*

Balanitis	3
Paraphymosis	1
Gonorrhœa	18
Warts	2
Swelled testis	1
Spermatorrhœa (onanism)	2
Chancre	9
Indurated chancre	3
Phagedænic chancre	3
Bubo	1
Secondary symptoms	18
Tertiary syphilis of face	2
Tertiary affections of skin	1
Total venereal	64
Non-venereal, total	23

Each of the above cases was classed according to its most salient symptom, although it frequently happened that a patient presented several forms of the same disease. Thus any one, at very small cost of trouble, may prepare elementary papers for statistics; and I venture to impress upon medical readers, without pretending to elaborate a scheme, and I dare say only following in the track of all judicious professors, that if they will adopt the habitual preparation of similar forms, carefully dated, and return them to some of the medical or statistical associations, some very valuable tables might, in course of time, be constructed, which could not fail to be advantageous to the profession and to humanity. The results of the table are such as any one conversant with the working of syphilis in large capitals would have anticipated. Out of 87 males, 64 were the venereal cases tabulated above, and 23 mixed diseases, such as

bad fingers, ulcerated legs, and so on. Among the former, I found gonorrhœa and secondary symptoms equally abundant. These will always be the most frequent forms among masses of men who neglect themselves. I did not tabulate the various forms of secondary symptoms, but affections of the skin and tongue were rife. I noticed only one case of rupia, and one of iritis. Papular eruptions were common.

I am disposed to attribute some share in the diminished virulence of venereal complaints to the opening of this and other perfectly free institutions, together with a slight increase of cleanliness among the poor—though by no means proportional, as yet, to the increase of water supply,—the institution of public baths, and the greater cheapness of soap and clothing.

The forms of chancre I witnessed were not serious, and phagedæna was rare, although the patients I saw were mostly from the very dregs of society. I should add, that the weather had been mild and dry for the previous three weeks, both very favourable conditions for the cure of this class of out-patient disease.

In arranging my papers, I lately lighted upon a similar table, made fifteen years ago, when the same department was under the care of Mr. Gay. It will be observed to correspond with the foregoing one, as regards the relative proportions of venereal and non-venereal cases:—

*Mr. Gay's Out-Patients (Males) at the Royal Free Hospital,
August 9th, 1842.*

Balanitis	6
Gonorrhœa... ..	32
Swelled testis	4
Urinary fistula	1
Primary syphilis	10
Secondary ditto... ..	6
Tertiary ditto	1
Bubo	2
Total venereal	62
Total non-venereal	19

The excessive proportion of gonorrhœa cases here is remarkable, amounting, as it does, to 50 per cent. of the whole; the non-venereal complaints presented nothing unusual. It would appear, then, that two-thirds of the male applicants for relief at this institution have been driven to it by venereal affections; and it would seem probable that this has been going on for fifteen years at least.

MILITARY HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE.

Admissions into Hospital for Venereal Affections among the Dragoon Guards and Dragoons serving in the United Kingdom during Seven Years and a Quarter previous to 1837.

From the "Statistical Reports on the Sickness, Mortality, and Invaliding among the Troops in the United Kingdom, the Mediterranean, and British America," presented to Parliament in 1839, I extract the following table:—

Syphilis primitiva	1,415
Syphilis consecutiva	335
Ulcus penis non syphiliticum	2,144
Bubo simplex	884
Cachexia syphiloidea	4
Gonorrhœa	2,449
Hernia humoralis	714
Stricture urethræ	100
Phymosis et paraphymosis	27
Total cases during seven and a-quarter years	8,072
Total aggregate strength for ditto	44,611
Annual mean strength for ditto... ..	6,153

Thus 181 per 1000, or about one man in five, appear to have been attacked. Primary ulcers on the penis were more numerous than discharges from the urethra, the numbers being 3559 primary ulcers, 2449 cases of gonorrhœa; say, about one soldier in twelve suffered from the former, one in eighteen from the latter, once during the period.

The above table was printed in the last edition of my work "On the Diseases of the Generative Organs." I extract the following table from a subsequent Report on army diseases from 1837 to 1847.

Admissions into Hospital from Venereal Disease and Deaths among the Dragoon Guards and Dragoons, the Foot Guards, and Infantry of the Line serving in the United Kingdom from April 1st, 1837, to March 31st, 1847.

	Cavalry.	Foot Guards.	Infantry.	Total.	Deaths.
Aggregate strength	54,374	40,120	160,103	254,597	
Syphilis primitiva	1,396	4,769	6,157	12,322	1
Syphilis consecutiva... ..	462	536	2,085	3,083	8
Ulcus penis non syphiliticum	2,920	883	13,380	17,183	1
Bubo simplex	1,495	989	6,635	9,119	1
Gonorrhœa	3,725	2,198	12,988	18,911	...
Hernia humoralis	1,019	558	2,768	4,345	...
Stricture urethræ	131	92	198	421	4
Cachexia syphiloidea... ..	5	...	7	12	2
Phymosis et paraphymosis	52	18	217	287	...
Total... ..	11,205	10,043	44,435	65,683	17
Number of men per 1000 of strength admitted during ten years... ..	206	250	277	257	

Dr. Balfour, who, with Sir Alexander Tulloch, drew up the report from which this table was compiled, has kindly favoured me with the following particulars, which may serve to illustrate it:—

In answer to the inquiry why this distinction is made between the foot-guards and infantry, he informed me that the line contains a large proportion of recruits, and of men returning from foreign service; whereas in the foot-guards there is usually a much greater proportion of soldiers who have arrived at maturity on the one hand, and who, on the other, have not served in foreign climates. As these circumstances were

likely to have affected the amount of sickness and mortality, the returns of the two classes were kept separate in preparing the tables.

Dr. Balfour also remarks, that the meaning of the distinct classification of "*Syphilis primitiva*" and "*Ulcus penis non syphiliticum*," is not in pursuance of any written regulation or printed direction. The surgeon is at full liberty to enter his cases under either title. In answer to my doubt—resulting from the discrepancy of the table with my preconceptions—whether all cases of gonorrhœa are noted in the army, he told me that, as far as his experience went, no great number of them escaped notice, as health inspections were made once a week, which is the general rule in the service. If a soldier is found at inspection to be labouring under disease, he is reported for having concealed it to his superior officer, who orders him punishment-drill on his discharge from hospital. In order to induce him to apply early for relief, the soldier is told that if he do so, he may probably be only a few days instead of several weeks under treatment.

It is contrary to the rules of the service to treat men out of hospital; even were it otherwise, the habits of the soldier and the accommodation in barracks would not favour celerity of cure.

I called Dr. Balfour's attention to the large number of army cases followed by hernia humoralis, the proportion of which exceeds what we are accustomed to see in private or in hospital practice. It follows about one case in four of gonorrhœa in the army generally, and one in three in the cavalry; and Dr. Balfour informs me it probably arises among the latter from the effects of horse exercise, and, speaking of the army generally, from the secret use of injections to check discharge, and the exercise taken at drill when the man has not reported himself in the very earliest stage of the disease. As regards relapses among soldiers, it is as difficult to say as in private practice whether they are genuine or, in fact, fresh attacks.

If a man has chancre together with gonorrhœa or hernia humoralis, he would, probably, be entered as suffering from syphilis; but ample discretion is allowed to the surgeon.

The cases of syphilis primitiva among the household infantry seem enormously to outnumber those in other corps, being one to every ten soldiers of the former against one in twenty-six of the infantry at large. The proportion of syphilis consecutiva throughout the army is large, being as one to four cases of syphilis primitiva. In the brigade of Guards, though the average of syphilis primitiva is heavy, as above stated, only 11 per cent. of the cases are followed by secondary symptoms, which, however, follow 33 per cent. of the cases in the Line. It is not improbable, I apprehend, that some portion of the heavy mortality attributed to secondary syphilis would have been more accurately classed under the head of cachexia syphiloidea.

Dr. Balfour says a mild mercurial treatment is usually pursued in the army, for hard sores especially. Some surgeons give no mercury; but this depends upon the discretion of the individual. Sir James M'Grigor, the late Director-General of the Army Medical Department, issued a circular some years ago, soon after the publication of Mr. Rose's work, in which attention was called to the subject: but full discretionary power was left in the hands of the surgeon.

An apparent increase will be observed in the number of diseased soldiers during the second of the above periods. The annual number of diseased cavalry in the first table was 181; and in the second 206 per 1000 men. This increase would appear enormous; and it is quite an open question whether, in truth, it represents an aggravation of dissipation and disease, in spite of the advances of science and more careful army management, or, as Dr. Balfour, who drew up these valuable tables, suggests, is apparent only, resulting from more painstaking and systematic collection of returns, for the continuation of which I shall look with anxiety.

It must be remembered, also, that the same man may be in hospital several times in a year, and thus figure upon paper as several patients; but, making every allowance, the documents before us show amply how great is the enemy we have to deal with.

It is cheering, nevertheless, to observe that the absolute deaths in the last decennial period upon an aggregate of 254,597 men numbered only 17; and happily, also, we now rarely meet with those losses of the palate, nose, or portions of the cranium which our museums show must formerly have been frequent.

I will now endeavour to show the condition of a particular regiment. In 1851, Dr. Gordon, surgeon to the 57th, read a paper before the Surgical Society of Ireland, in which he states (see "Dublin Medical Press," February 26th, 1851) that, during the year ending 31st March, 1850, the following number, out of an average strength of 408 men, were treated for venereal diseases in the Head-quarters Hospital:—

Species of Venereal Disease.	No. admitted.	No. of days in hospital.	Amount of soldier's pay.		
Syphilis primitiva	53	1210	£65	10	3
Syphilis consecutiva	13	462	25	5	11
Ulcer penis non-syphiliticum	2	43	2	3	7
Bubo simplex	10	281	15	4	5
Gonorrhoea	32	481	26	1	1
Hernia humoralis	3	42	2	5	6
Total	113	2519	136	10	9

On this the Doctor observes: "For the sake of convenience, however, let us assume that the actual sum is 136*l.* for an average strength of 500 men; then, as we have taken the very low average of 24,000 as the strength of the army in Ireland, we find that, according to this calculation, the sum annually lost to the State, in consequence of the prevalence of venereal diseases among them, amounts to no less than 6528*l.*"*

* It may be stated, that although the apparent loss to the country is 6528*l.* worth of the pay of soldiers put *hors de combat*, about five-sixths thereof is recovered, as 10*d.* per day is stopped from each man's pay while he is in hospital. The loss to the country is his time, which, however, during peace, is non-productive.

NAVY EXPERIENCE.

It appeared, from official returns extending over the seven years from 1830 to 1836 inclusive, and relating to an aggregate of 21,493 men employed in the "home service,"—that is to say, in our ports and about our coasts,—that 2880, say 134 per thousand, or 13·40 per cent., were attacked with venereal affections during that period.

In the year 1851 the following report was published, carrying on the experience from 1837 to 1843, both years inclusive :—

*Report of the Health of the Navy (Home Service) for the Seven Years
from 1837 to 1843.*

	1837.	1838.	1839.	1840.	1841.	1842.	1843.	Total.	Ratio per 1000 men.
Gonorrhœa ...	93	82	101	122	200	207	205	1010	31·9
Stricture ...	4	6	12	19	24	17	4	85	2·6
Orchitis ...	20	8	13	25	50	33	86	235	7·6
Syphilis ...	118	122	132	175	320	275	314	1456	46·1

It appears from another table in the same report, that on board of ships employed "variously"—i.e., not exclusively on the "home" service (when the men are apt to give way to excesses in foreign ports and with a variety of seriously affected women), the proportions of syphilis nearly double those given above, being 73 against 46 per thousand men, while the gonorrhœa patients were 44 against 31 per thousand.

These diseases, then, are more common among soldiers than among sailors, owing probably to the more limited opportunities of becoming infected which the profession of the latter leaves open to them.

MERCHANT SERVICE EXPERIENCE.

In 1851, Mr. Busk, surgeon to the hospital ship *Dreadnought*, kindly furnished me with the returns of the venereal cases that were treated in that institution. These embrace a period of five years, during which 13,081 medical and surgical cases were admitted, of which no less than 3703, or 28 per cent., were venereal :—

Months.	Total number admitted.	Surgical, not venereal.	Venereal.	Proportion percent. on admission.	Average (days) stay in hospital.
January	1,246	356	303	26·6	22·4
February	1,015	302	273	28·5	21·8
March	1,073	319	327	31·2	20·0
April	893	272	248	22·2	20·8
May	971	342	251	26·7	23·4
June	986	309	242	25·6	21·3
July	1,082	355	306	25·6	20·7
August	1,093	335	320	30·6	24·2
September	1,148	334	348	28·9	23·5
October	1,151	319	354	31·1	21·4
November	1,188	355	369	32·4	23·4
December	1,235	399	362	28·5	23·9
Annual totals	13,081	3997	3703	28·3	22·5

In a communication the same gentleman has very recently favoured me with, he states his impression that the number of venereal patients is now considerably less than formerly; and from what he can see of the patients, he is satisfied that there is a far less number of severe cases.

As far, then, as we may judge from the data above cited, venereal diseases are still very common among large bodies of otherwise healthy males engaged in the public service. At the same time scurvy, and hospital gangrene, have nearly disappeared from the reports. The returns do not enable us to arrive at any accurate conclusion how far they incapacitate their victims from duty. Dr. Wilson, who must be supposed to be a competent judge, inasmuch as he has compiled the returns, tells me, that on an average each man so affected is incapacitated from doing duty for a month. In the army, his stay in hospital has been averaged at six weeks. In the return furnished by Mr. Busk, the average stay in hospital is stated to be twenty-two days; this is similar to that in the army (see p. 41); and during five years the expense of venereal patients was 4165*l*.

I doubt whether venereal complaints, although evidently more severe formerly, were ever more common than at present, or whether, since syphilis was first treated in hospitals, the large proportion here noticed, namely two out of three out-patients at the Free Hospital, nearly one in two at St. Bartholomew's, one out of every three at the *Dreadnought*, one out of four in the army, one out of seven in the navy, at any former period suffered from venereal disease,—and yet many believe that the disease is declining. That such is not the case, if number be any criterion, must be admitted by all who weigh well the above statistics, and compare them with the statements met with in nearly all the books that have treated of syphilis. I think the surgeon to Queen Elizabeth, who nearly three centuries ago penned the following words, could he rise from his grave to see the present condition of the complaint, would corroborate my opinion:—

“If I be not deceived in mine opinion (friendly reader), I suppose the disease itself was never more rife in Naples, Italie, France, or Spaine, than it is this day in the Realme of England.* I may speake boldly because I speake truly; and yet I speake it with grieve of minde that in the Hospital of Saint Bartholomew, in London, there hath been cured of this disease, by me and three others, within five years, to the number of one thousand and more. I speake nothing of Saint Thomas Hospital, and other houses about the citie, wherein an infinite multitude are daily cured. *It happened very seldom in the Hospitall of Saint Bartholomew's whilst I stayed there, amongst every twenty diseased that were taken into the said house, which was most commonly on the Monday, ten of them were infected with Lues Venerea.*”—*A brieife and necessary Treatise touching the cure of the disease now vsually called Lues Venerea*, by W. Clovves, one of her Maiesties Chirurgions, 1696, p. 149.†

If my inferences are correct, that venereal diseases, though decreasing in virulence, are numerically as prevalent as ever, where single men are

* Mr. Coote calls attention to the rarity of venereal diseases in the East (where polygamy is universal), which it is hard to account for, unless indeed, adds he, it has been introduced, as is the case in our Indian possessions, by the formation of large military depôts, or the construction of cities. The practice of polygamy seems to have been introduced in consequence of the rapid evanescence of female beauty and attractiveness.

† A copy of this work can be seen in the library of the Medico-Chirurgical Society.

massed together, is it not time to consider, whether in the present advanced state of civilization, some methodical steps should not be taken still farther to mitigate and, as nearly as may be, eradicate the evil, more especially as we have so successfully operated against many others of "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to."

Truth demands the acknowledgment that the individual affections both in England and on the Continent, are less severe in the present day. In but few cases do the symptoms run high, or is the patient permanently crippled by the disease. I myself can testify to enormous changes in this respect during the last twenty years. The frightful cases, which formerly were really not uncommon, are now very rare in private practice. The weekly average of deaths from syphilis in London, within the last ten years, varies from 1·6 to 4·3. Phagedæna, or "the black lion of Portugal," was formerly to be met with weekly in our hospitals. It is now an exceptional case. Sir Astley Cooper states, that in the St. Giles' Workhouse at one time and in one room there were seven of these terrible cases, of which five were fatal. I need not say that, thanks to the improved treatment, and the many channels of relief available to the poor, these wholesale calamities are put a stop to, although an isolated case, as the Registrar-General's tables tell us, may every now and then result in a fatal termination.*

The registered mortality is just at present considerably above the average, as will be seen in the following

Table of Registered Deaths from Syphilis in corresponding weeks of eleven years.

Week.	1847	1848	1849	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	Mean		1857.	
											Deaths.	Temp.	Deaths.	Temp.
29th	3	1	1	3	1	3	3	1	2	7	2·5	62·6°	7	68·0°
30th	1	3	0	4	0	2	4	4	2	3	2·3	62·2°	4	68·3°
31st	1	5	2	4	3	3	3	3	5	3	3·2	62·4°	5	65·6°
32nd	3	0	0	3	2	1	4	4	1	1	1·9	62·9°	5	65·2°

CONTINENTAL EXPERIENCE.

PARIS.

The different forms of venereal disease prevalent at the present day in Paris will clearly appear to the student of the following table, which I made up while going round M. Ricord's wards at the Hôpital du Midi, on the 14th of October, 1855. I may premise that he sees out-patients twice a week, and selects from them the most urgent and surgically interesting cases for immediate admission into the house. On the day

* It appears that the French army quartered in Rome in 1850 suffered under most severe forms of primary syphilis. In a few days after infection gangrene of the prepuce took place, and severe forms of buboes were very common. Constitutional symptoms came on more quickly than in France, and showed themselves in two-thirds of the cases; whereas in French military hospitals secondary symptoms are exceptional. Yet the same treatment (mercurial) was employed. It was likewise remarked that iodide of potash was more useful in primary and secondary symptoms in Italy than in France.—M. Chalon, Chirurgien sous-aide: "Annales des Maladies de la Peau," vol. iv., p. 161, 162.

being in the wards at one time. Here the student may study induration in all its forms. The frequency of this symptom in the wards depends upon M. Ricord's admission by preference, of those patients who present it.

It would be vain and unsafe to attempt any estimate of the proportion of diseased prostitutes, who are following their calling in the streets of London. But the French authorities are at least enabled to show the exact proportion of disease among the limited number who are under police control, and the editors of the third edition of Parent-Duchâtelet's work have added the following interesting table :—

Annual Average of Syphilis among Registered Prostitutes in Paris in the Suburbs, as well as the Unregistered.

Year.	Registered prostitutes attached to brothels within the walls.*	Ditto, in the suburbs.	Registered prostitutes living at large.	Unregistered women captured being prostitutes.
	Diseased.	Diseased.	Diseased.	Diseased.
1845	1 in 142	1 in 59	1 in 261	1 in 6
1846	1 in 151	1 in 53	1 in 183	1 in 6
1847	1 in 154	1 in 51	1 in 350	1 in 6
1848	1 in 125	1 in 37	1 in 181	1 in 5
1849	1 in 128	1 in 44	1 in 200	1 in 5
1850	1 in 148	1 in 47	1 in 142	1 in 5
1851	1 in 198	1 in 60	1 in 180	1 in 5
1852	1 in 184	1 in 75	1 in 349	1 in 5
1853	1 in 183	1 in 122	1 in 402	1 in 5
1854	1 in 176	1 in 102	1 in 376	1 in 4

The greater proportion of disease affecting prostitutes attached to brothels is explained by the girls being compelled (particularly in the lower description of house) to prostitute themselves to all comers, no matter how numerous, be they covered with rags or not, who can satisfy the demands of the *dame de maison*. But the woman living at large has a choice left her whether or not she will tolerate a man she may think diseased.

Among the registered females there were, in 1854, 358 cases of uterine disorder, and among the unregistered 282—total, 640.

Certain razzias made lately upon the clandestine prostitutes frequented by the soldiers have proved that two and sometimes three out of five of them were diseased.

Every French soldier or sailor attacked with syphilis is bound to report himself to the surgeon-major of the service to which he belongs, and should he do so spontaneously, receives no punishment. If he should not do so, he is treated *à la salle des consignés*, and punished with a month *de consigne* on his leaving hospital. He is called upon to point out the woman that has infected him; but this regulation is hard to enforce, as rather than inform, the men take punishment. In many cases it would be an impossibility, as they frequent a plurality of women, and are occasionally too far gone in liquor at the time of the act to establish an identity.

* See chapter On Police Supervision, &c., for an explanation of these headings (page 82).

BREST.

At Brest, the Portsmouth of France, out of 5947 men, forming in 1852 the marine artillery and infantry of the garrison, 1635, or 27.50 per cent. contracted syphilis. In 1853, out of an effective of 6294 individuals, 2144, or 34 per cent. were attacked. I find, from a tract by Dr. Strohl, that the mean monthly strength for 1856 of the garrison of Strasburg, where the sanitary regulations are very strict, was 7712, and the venereals of the same year were 1009, or 13 per cent.

AMERICAN ARMY.

Sir Alexander Tulloch has kindly furnished me with a report on venereal diseases in the American army, compiled from official returns, from which it appears that in the northern division, out of an aggregate of 22,246 men, 971 cases of gonorrhœa occurred, or 1 in 20; and 462 of syphilis, or 1 in 48. In the southern division, out of an aggregate of 24,979 men, there were 929 cases of gonorrhœa, or 1 in 27; and 584 cases of syphilis, or 1 in 43.

BELGIAN ARMY.

In 1842, says Dr. Michel Lévy, in his "Traité d'Hygiène Publique," tome ii., p. 751, M. Vlemineckx, Inspector-general of Health of the Belgian Army, effected such a diminution in the number of venereal cases, that only one soldier in 190 was affected; whereas, at the same time, in the French garrisons of Strasburg and Lyons, one in every 33, and one in 40 respectively were affected. In a communication to the "Gazette Medicale de Paris," January, 1846, M. Vlemineckx stated, "Il n'y a plus que cent trente vénériens, dans toute l'armée Belge, qui présente un effective de vingt-cinq à trente mille hommes." But I confess I can hardly reconcile this with other information from Brussels, to the effect that of a garrison of less than 3000 men, the entries into the military venereal hospital were 413, in the year 1856.

GARRISON OF BERLIN.

Among the garrison of Berlin, 19,030 strong, there were in 1849 (while for a time prostitution was proscribed and ignored), 1423 cases of syphilis. Prostitution being again admitted to exist, and strict inspection introduced, the numbers dropped as soon as 1852, to 332. It is worth notice, that in 1852, while the new regulations were in course of establishment, 38 females were examined weekly, and the cases of detected syphilis were 29 per cent., while in April, 1853, out of 540 inspected, there were but 5 per cent. found syphilitic.

Before Parent-Duchâtelet commenced his investigations, one public woman out of every nine was found infected, whereas at the time he published his first edition, the proportion had fallen to one in every sixteen.*

BRUSSELS.

Dr. Lebeau has been so kind as to furnish me with an interesting memoir on the clinical service of Professor Thiry's division of the Hôpital St. Pierre, at Brussels, in 1855, written by Mr. Decoster, a house-surgeon of that institution. There were treated 551 patients, of whom 306 were males and 245 females.

* Michel Lévy, tom. ii., p. 751.

The cases of the males presented the following symptoms :—

Acute gonorrhœa	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	91
Gleet	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Swelled testis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	68
Phymosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Balanitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Bubo simplex	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	52
Stricture	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Warts...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Mucous tubercles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Granular urethritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Urethral chancre	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Chancre of glans and prepuce	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	55
Chancre at anus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Buboes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Secondary symptoms, consisting of—									
Sore throat	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
Affection of skin	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Condylomata	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Syphilitic tubercles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Iritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

} of which 42
indurated.

Those of the females presented the following :—

Acute vulvitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Urethritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	29
Urethra vaginitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Acute vaginitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Phlegmonous abscesses of the labia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Abscess of the vaginal glands	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Sub-urethral abscess	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Excoriations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Fissures of the anus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
Bubo	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Warts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Various	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Affections of the uterus...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	45
Affections of the os uteri	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
Fissure of the neck of ditto	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
Vegetation, &c., on ditto	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Tubercles on ditto	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Chancres, simple or phagedænic, on the vulva and orifice of the urethra in	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	68
Chancres in the canal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Chancres, vaginal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Chancres on the anus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Chancres at the neck of uterus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Chancres at the commissure	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Buboes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Secondary symptoms	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

} of which 6
only became
indurated.

It will, doubtless, strike non-professional readers that the totals of the above columns would, if added up, far exceed the number of cases I have given on the preceding page, namely, 306 males and 245 females. This is to be accounted for by repeated entry of certain cases which presented a plurality of strongly marked symptoms.

I have copied from Mr. Wyld's "Medical Institutions of Austria," the following report of cases treated in the syphilitic division of the General Hospital at Vienna, in the years 1839 and 1840 :—

	MALES.							FEMALES.						
	Admitted.	Cured.	Uncured.	Improved.	Transferred.	Died.	Remaining.	Admitted.	Cured.	Uncured.	Transferred.	Died.	Remaining.	Total females.
Chancre	186	161	...	...	8	...	17	186	138	91	...	15	...	32
Condyloma... ..	111	98	...	...	2	...	11	111	383	238	5	36	...	54
Bubo	211	163	2	...	11	2	30	211	69	47	...	4	3	15
Gonorrhœa... ..	267	247	...	...	7	...	13	267	159	115	3	21	...	20
Abscessus labii ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11	6	...	...	...	...	5
Hernia humoralis ...	94	91	...	...	1	...	2	94	...	...	...	...	...	...
Testes syphiliticæ ...	3	2	...	...	1	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Phymosis et para- phymosis ... }	135	125	...	2	4	...	4	135	...	...	...	...	...	...
Angina ulcerosa ...	21	20	...	...	1	...	...	21	16	11	...	2	1	2
Eruptiones... ..	5	3	...	...	2	...	...	5	36	25	...	5	...	6
General secondary sy- philis ... }	20	9	...	...	1	1	9	20	10	2	1	4	...	3
Caries... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	1
Scrofula with syphilis	5	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	1058	922	2	2	43	3	86	1058	823	585	9	88	4	137
														823
														1881

EXPERIENCE IN PRIVATE PRACTICE.

I cannot pretend to offer an opinion as to the general increase or decrease of these complaints in private practice. There is in our profession very little interchange of notes and statistics, and no organized correspondence with any body or society, and I fancy no medical man could draw a sound deduction as to the greater or less prevalence of any particular disease from the state of his own practice. He who should believe and say disease was extravagantly rife in London because he individually happened to be much in vogue, would deliver himself of as notable a fallacy, I apprehend, as another who should declare it was totally extinct, because from being out of repute, out of date, out of the stream, or for some other of the thousand reasons which sway the British public, he never happened to see a patient at all.

Each one, however, may without difficulty contribute a little information to the common stock by analysing the mass of cases which are presented to him. I shall give here one or two opinions, resulting from my own experience, which may, perhaps, be hereafter of value to others wishing to compare the proportions of the various affections in 1867 with those prevailing in our day.

In the first place—the venereal affections now seen in private practice are slight. Patients come to the medical man early. The *mauvaise honte*, which formerly acted to their prejudice, is passing away, and the necessity for immediate treatment generally admitted. To this cause I attribute to a great extent the mildness of the disease, and the rapidity of cure in the majority of cases. No doubt can exist that improved treatment and a more correct diagnosis are operating in the same direction; science has been assisted by the almost complete abstinence of the

upper classes generally from intoxication, though not from liquor, and the liberal ablutions now so much and so beneficially in fashion.

The loss of the virile organ is, now-a-days, a thing almost unheard of in private practice. A surgeon might practise in this town for many years without gaining any experience of the affection of the bones of the nose which causes that organ to fall in. It is true that we occasionally meet with an obstinate case of this affection in highly strumous patients, but even these, under appropriate treatment, escape the sad deformity, and ultimately recover. I have, every now and then, cases of tertiary symptoms, which return again and again, and offer most rebellious instances of the virulence of the disease amongst the weak and debilitated; but still death from syphilis is almost unheard of in private practice. I did see one some time ago. It came on gradually from a want of rallying power in the system, and a few tubercles were found in the lungs. It is to be regretted that in the present day the indurated sore is not more rare, attended as it is with many sad sequelæ. Secondary symptoms are not severe, but, although slight, they linger on for months, now better, now worse, until the powers of the system, if well supported, get the better of the affections of the tongue or the eruption on the skin. Rarely, now, are the deeper structures affected, and patients generally, if not very injudiciously treated, completely recover within a reasonable time.

The results of private practice bear out the statistics from the public institutions, that gonorrhœa is the most frequent of the venereal affections. It no longer, however, takes the formidable shapes of bygone times, although it is often to the full as tiresome from assuming the chronic form.

I am often obliged to remind discontented patients who complain of tardy cures, that though they have to thank advancing science for such mild results as now form the penalty of their frailty, they must not expect a day when the complaint is to be divested of all pain or annoyance. Neither the disease nor our profession are in general so much to be blamed for the worst phases which the former even now occasionally assumes, as the naturally bad constitution of the sufferer or the perverse industry he has applied to the debilitation of a sound one. He has oftentimes his own neglect to thank for doubled and trebled suffering—often his own folly in bringing to us only the reversion of a case complicated, and perhaps aggravated, by one or other of the villanous quacksalvers who are still permitted to flaunt their nostrums in the public face, to gull, to swindle, and to kill.

While these sheets were going through the press, the following case of victimization by one of this fraternity came under my notice. A gentleman who believed himself to be suffering from spermatorrhœa went to a noted quack and paid his usual fee. A specimen of his urine was immediately demanded, and on examination under a microscope, pronounced to be full of spermatozoa. The patient showed unmistakeable signs of alarm, and the quack, finding he had the proper sort of customer, boldly predicted speedy death, to be averted only by the purchase of a cure for fifty pounds. The first call of nine pounds on account of this sum was paid on the spot, and the remainder within a few days. The patient was then, I am assured, presented with a large

box of medicines, ready packed, and desired to keep in a room at the same temperature for twenty-eight weeks, or thereabouts, and not attempt to breathe the outer air. After some weeks of unrewarded perseverance in this *régime*, the unhappy patient again sought the presence of the wizard, and complained that he felt no better. He was asked, "How could he expect it? Had he not disobeyed? His presence there was proof enough of that!" He pleaded in vain, that to keep his room for twenty-eight weeks, if not impossible, would be his ruin, and was told that, having by his own act removed the responsibility from the learned doctor's shoulders, their contract was at an end, and he must now put up with the possible ill consequences, and the certain loss of his money. It was under these circumstances that he came to me, in a highly nervous state, and of course much annoyed at being bereft of fifty pounds by this "microscope dodge." In three weeks he recovered, and would not have rushed, as he did, into the courts of law but for the impudent plea set up for not returning the money after failure of the consideration. The recipient of the fifty pounds actually stated that the deluded one had been guilty of masturbation, and therefore could not show his face in court. The challenge was accepted, and the infamous imputation of course faded away. I cannot show the sequel better than by quoting the following passage from the judgment of the Court :

"I have not the slightest doubt upon this case—that it is a case for damages, and that the plaintiff is entitled to recover the whole of the sum claimed. I think it is highly creditable to the plaintiff that he had the moral courage to come into court and expose this transaction ; and as to the agency,* the assistant, whoever he may be, has certainly committed a gross fraud, and one cannot help feeling warmly that this fraud was practised. At the same time one cannot help seeing as to ——— not having been present at the interviews, that this is a mere stratagem to secure himself against the consequences of being brought into a court of justice; and the whole of the case, I think, is very discreditable to the defendant, and the plaintiff is entitled to the judgment of the court for the whole of the amount sued for. One cannot help saying that the whole case is most discreditable and disgusting, and I shall allow the highest expenses to the witnesses."

The editor of "The Lancet" observed, in conclusion of his remarks upon this case :

"How long is this system to continue? It is a disgrace to the laws, which falsely pretend to regulate practitioners of medicine and to protect the public, that such things are allowed. The case in question is simply an illustration of a system so ruinous, so devastating, so fatal to its victims, that it calls loudly for legislative interference. Laws, however framed, will probably be inadequate altogether to suppress those outrages upon humanity ; but legislation may do something to mitigate and arrest them. If we are to have laws for the protection of women and the suppression of obscene publications, why should we not have an Act of Parliament to suppress a traffic which, in its consequences, is equally detrimental to the health and happiness of a large portion of the public?"

* It was alleged by the defendant's counsel that the offence had been committed by an assistant of the defendant.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MODERN HARLOT'S PROGRESS.

WHEN the licentious epoch of the Restoration, due itself to the national recoil from the abortive attempt of the Puritans to enact religion and morality, was succeeded by the austerity of the Roman Catholic James and the decorous court of William and Mary, and while the fixed and floating population of the capital was increasing with the facilities of travel, the growth of trade, and the general wealth, there is no doubt that long rampant immorality—incurable at short notice—was but held repressed, and compelled to hide its head. A remarkable impetus was therefore given to comparatively secret prostitution, corresponding to the decrease in adultery and overt concubinage which about that time ceased to be indispensable qualifications of the man of parts and fashion.

When I consider that genteel society was passing during the period of the Augustan essayists from a political and moral delirium towards a state of repose, and the artificial scarcity of trained intellects which yet recent events had created among the class for whom they wrote—I am not surprised that earnest authors, careful of administering strong meat to babes, should have elected to work upon the public mind, as they did, with types and parables. But I do wonder that so many able men, from that period to our own day, who might have touched moral pitch without the fear or imputation of defilement, have, whether through moral cowardice or considerations of expediency, still as it were by concert, been content to do little more than retouch and restore the pictures of the ancient masters, adding, from time to time, perhaps, some horrid feature. Thus has been painfully built up a sort of “bogie” in a corner cupboard, unheeded by the infant, terrible to the aged, the untempted, and others whom it concerned not; while the flower of the people have rushed into the streets and worshipped the immodest Venus.

Thus, I believe, was firmly rooted—if it did not thus originate—and thus has mightily prospered, remaining even to our day an overshadowing article of almost religious belief, the notion that the career of the woman who once quits the pinnacle of virtue involves the very swift decline and ultimate total loss of health, modesty, and temporal prosperity. And herein are contained three vulgar errors:—

1. That once a harlot, always a harlot.
2. That there is no possible advance, moral or physical, in the condition of the actual prostitute.
3. That the harlot's progress is short and rapid.

And the sooner fearless common sense has cleared the ground of fallacy, the sooner may statesmen see their way to handle a question of which they have not denied the importance.

It is a little too absurd to tell us that "the dirty, intoxicated slattern, in tawdry finery and an inch thick in paint"—long a conventional symbol of prostitution—is a correct figure in the middle of the nineteenth century. If she is not apocryphal, one must at least go out of the beaten path to find her. She is met with, it is true, in filthy taps, resorts of crime, and in the squalid lairs of poverty—rarely courting the light, but lurking in covert spots to catch the reckless, the besotted, and the young of the opposite sex. And though such may be even numbered by hundreds, it must, on reflection, be conceded by those who have walked through the world with open eyes, that, considering the square mileage of the metropolis, and the enormous aggregate I am treating of, they are but as drops in an ocean. The Gorgon of the present day against whom we should arm our children should be a woman who, whether sound or diseased, is generally pretty and elegant—oftener painted by Nature than by art—whose predecessors cast away the custom of drunkenness when the gentlemen of England did the same—and on whose backs, as if following the poet's direction, *in corpore vili*, the ministers of fashion exhibit the results of their most egregious experiments.

The shades of London prostitution—the previous definition at pages 7 and 8 being kept in view—are as numberless as those of society at large, and may be said to blend at their edges, but no further. The microcosm, in fact, exhibits, like its archetype, saving one, all the virtues and good qualities, as well as all the vices, weaknesses, and follies.

The great substitution of unchastity for female honour has run through and dislocated all the system ; but it must not be imagined that, though disordered and for a time lost to our sight, the other strata of the woman's nature have ceased to exist.

The class maintain their notions of caste and quality with all the pertinacity of their betters. The greatest amount of income procurable with the least amount of exertion, is with them, as with society, the grand gauge of position ; and each individual, like her betters, sets up for private contemplation some ideal standard with which she may compare, deeming most indispensable to beauty and gentility the particular elements she may best lay claim to.

I see the *monde* and *demi-monde* as shy of one another among the prostitutes of London as in other classes. I see, too, the arrogance of bran-new, short-lived prosperity, that has dashed from the ranks, and the jealous writhing of the beaten ruck. I see the active sinfulness and passive heedlessness of one set, and the patient hope and bewildered entanglement of another. But not admitting such salient differences between this fraction and the mass of the community as justify its political severance, I cannot see that it presents material for a special physiology ; and as such a task would be neither profitable to the reader nor congenial to myself, I will, as nearly as I may, avoid it. A writer who could analyse and catalogue the combinations of the kaleidoscope may some day, perhaps, be found to undertake the equally useless task of dissecting to each filament this twisted yarn of everyday virtue, vice, and good and evil qualities—variegated by degree of education—stained

foully by one predominant vice and its ancillary failings—interwoven from end to end of the piece with one half of society, and supposed by courteous fiction to exist without the cognizance of the other. We can well afford to wait his coming, for we have not put to use one-half our present stock of knowledge.

The order may be divided into three classes—the “kept woman” (a repulsive term, for which I have in vain sought an English substitute), who has in truth, or pretends to have, but one paramour, with whom she, in some cases, resides; the common prostitute, who is at the service, with slight reservation, of the first comer, and attempts no other means of life; and the woman whose prostitution is a subsidiary calling.

The presence of the individual in either of these categories may of course depend upon a thousand accidents; but once in either rank, as a general rule her footing is permanent while her prostitution, in any sense of the word, continues. There is, although the moralists insist otherwise, little promotion, and less degradation. The cases of the latter are quite exceptional; those of the former less rare, but still not frequent. The seduction and primary desertion of each woman who afterwards becomes a prostitute is an affair apart; and the *liaison* of a woman with her seducer is generally of the shortest. This over, her remaining in the ranks of honest society, or her adoption of prostitution, become her question. Some few voluntarily take the latter alternative. Domestic servants, and girls of decent family, are generally driven headlong to the streets for support of themselves and their babies; needlewomen of some classes by the incompatibility of infant nursing with the discipline of the workshop. Those who take work at home are fortunate enough, and generally too happy, to reconcile continuance of their labours with a mother's nursing duties, and by management retain a permanent connexion with the army of labour, adopting prostitution only when their slender wages become insufficient for their legitimate wants.

Thus the *ouvrière* class—corresponding to the *grisette* of the French writers—and the promiscuous class of prostitutes—answering to their *lorettes*, are accounted for. Our first, or superior order, recruits its ranks as follows:—

1. From women cohabiting with, or separately maintained by, their seducers.

2. From kept women who are, as it were, in the business, and transfer their allegiance from party to party at the dictates of caprice or financial expediency.

3. From women whom men select for a thousand and one reasons, from promiscuous orders—or, as commonly said, “take off the town.”

4. From women similarly promoted from the *ouvrière* class.

The prominent or retiring position the individual occupies in these three divisions—allowing, of course, for exceptions influenced by her idiosyncrasies—depends mainly upon gaiety or gravity of temperament. These characteristics exaggerated, on the one hand into boisterous vulgarity, on the other into nervous retirement—both chequered, more or less, at times, by extreme depression and hysterical mirth—pervade the devotees to this calling, and influence their whole career. A woman endowed with the one may, for a time, by force of circumstances, assume the other—but for a time only. The spring recoils, and the natural

character asserts its sway. It is superfluous almost to allude, among men of the world, to the arrogant and offensive conduct into which some prostitutes of the upper class, and of mercurial temperament, will be betrayed, even when permitted to elbow respectability and good conduct in public places; or to their intense assumption of superiority over their less full-blown sisters, on the strength of an equipage, an opera box, a saddle-horse, a Brompton villa, and a visiting list. This is the kind of woman of whom I said just now that the loss of her honour seemed to have intensified every evil point in her character. She it is who inflicts the greatest scandal and damage upon society, and by whom, though she is but a fraction of her class, the whole are necessarily, but injudiciously, if not cruelly, judged. This is the flaunting, extravagant queen, who, young and fair—the milliners' herald of forthcoming fashions—will daily drag a boyish lover (for whose abject submission she will return tolerable constancy, and over whose virtue she presides like another Dian), will he nill he, like a lacquey, in her train to Blackwall parties, flower shows, and races—night after night to the "select ballet balls," plays, or public dancing saloons—will see him gaily, along with jockeys who are no gentlemen and gentlemen who are all jockey, through his capital or his allowances, and then, without a sigh, enlist in the service of another—perhaps his intimate friend—till she has run the gauntlet as kept mistress through half-a-dozen short generations of men about town.

Descend a step to the promiscuous category, and trace the harlot to whom a tavern-bar was congenial instead of repulsive on her first appearance there—say at sixteen or eighteen years of age. At thirty and at forty you will find her (if she rises in the scale) the loudest of the loud, in the utmost blaze of finery, looked on as "first-rate company" by aspiring gents, surrounded by a knot of "gentlemen" who applaud her rampant nonsense, and wondering, hotel-sick, country men of business, whose footsteps stray at night to where she keeps her foolish court. She is a sort of whitewashed sepulchre, fair to the eye, but full of inner rottenness—a mercenary human tigress; albeit there exists at times some paltry bull-dog, nursed in the same Bohemian den, who may light up all the fires of womanhood within her—some rascally enchanter, who may tame her at the height of her fury, when none else human may approach her, by whispering or blows. Exigent of respect beyond belief, but insufferably rude, she is proud and high-minded in talk one moment, but not ashamed to beg for a shilling the next. The great sums of money she sometimes earns, she spends with romantic extravagance, on her toilette partly, and partly circulates, with thoughtless generosity, among the lodging-house sharks and other baser parasites that feed upon her order.

Should such a light-minded woman descend in the scale of promiscuous prostitution, which of course is a matter of possibility, though not so likely as her rise, she will still be found the same. As no access of fortune will do much toward humanizing, so no ill-luck will soften or chasten her. She will be in Lambeth or Whitechapel as I have described her in Soho or the Haymarket—a drunken, brawling reprobate—but in a lower orbit.

On the other hand, the sad career in prostitution of the softer-minded woman, in whatever rank she may be, will be marked and affected by

that quality. Whatever befall her in this vale of tears, the gentle-minded woman will be gentle still; and with this native hue will be tinged all her dealings with the sisterhood, and with the rough rude males whom ever and anon it is her fate to meet. If fortunate enough to have the acquaintance of some quiet men of means, she will not be puffed up with vain-gloriousness, but seeking comfort in obscurity, and clinging fast to what respect she may gain of others, will profess—what I dare say she really often feels—disgust at brazen impudence, and all the pomps and vanities. Whether this eschewal be from real delicacy, or considerations of economy, or because any sort of notoriety, instead of cementing, as in the case of others mentioned, would be fatal to their particular *liaison*, it is hard to say; but, however that may be, it is no less true that hundreds of females so constituted are at this moment living within a few miles of Charing Cross, in easy if not elegant circumstances, with every regard to outward decorum and good taste, and shocking none of the public who will not attempt unnecessarily close investigation, but for all that “in a state of prostitution.” The ease and comparative prosperity that inflates the lighter woman into a public nuisance have ‘no such effect upon such a one as I have spoken of last. They but cause her to prize each day more highly peace and quietness—more sadly to regret the irrevocable past—more profoundly to yearn after some way out of the wilderness.

Among the promiscuous prostitutes of the milder order will be found a numerous band, who, unlike the magnificent virago of the supper-shops, rarely see the evening lamps. Sober, genteelly dressed, well ordered, often elegant in person—such girls have the taste and the power to select their acquaintances from among the most truly eligible men whom the present false state of society debars from marriage. Their attractions, indeed, are of the subdued order that neither the hot-blood of the novice nor the prurient fancy of the used-up rake could appreciate. Of course, they take the chances of their calling. They know that a short acquaintance often turns their sorrow into joy, and opens out a better, happier future. They know, too, that one unlucky hour may make them scatterers of pestilence. What wonder, then, that woman’s tact, sharpened by uses of adversity, should induce them to prefer the respect and counsel of well-bred men of settled character to the evanescent passion of mere youths. From the former they get lessons, rarely thrown away, on the value of repose and thrift; from the latter, only new proofs of folly and fickleness. With the one they may for a time forget their occupation; with the other, only sharpen memory. They exhibit at times the greatest respect for themselves, and for the opinions, scruples, and weaknesses of those with whom they are connected, and whom they love to call their “friends;” and, above all, they are notable for the intensity of love with which they will cling to the sister, the mother, the brother—in fact, to any one “from home” who, knowing of their fall, will not abjure them, or, ignorant of their present calling, still cherishes some respect and regard for them. The sick man is safe in their hands, and the fool’s money also. There is many a tale well known of their nursing and watching, and more than will do so could tell of the harlot’s guardianship in his hour of drunkenness. I have seen the fondest of daughters and mothers among them. I fancy

that where they have that regard for men which they are too pleased to return for mere politeness, they are well-meaning, and not always foolish friends—no abettors of extravagance, and, as far as absolute honesty is concerned, implicitly to be relied on. They are more the dupes than impostors—more sinned against than sinning—till the play is played out, the pilgrimage accomplished, and they who have long strained their eyes for a resting-place quit the painful road—as I say they mostly do—for a better life on earth; or, leaving hope behind on their discharge from the hospitals, issue to an obscurity more melancholy and degraded than ever. For of such on whom has fallen the lot of foul disease, or whom a loss of health or beauty has deprived of worthy associates, are the abject maundering creatures who haunt the lower dens of vice and crime. Deficient in mental and physical elasticity to resist the downward pressure of intermittent starvation and undying conscience, they are pulled from depth to lower deep, by men who trample, and women of their class who prey upon them. Liquor, which other organizations adopt as a jovial friend and partner of each gleam of sunshine, is to these the medicine and permanent aggravation of dejected misery. Cruelly injured by the other sex, they moodily resolve to let retribution take its course through their diseased agency; trodden under foot by society, what can society expect from them but scorn for scorn?*

The woman, the castle of whose modesty offered stoutest resistance to the storm of the seducer, often becomes in time the most abiding stronghold of vice. Saturated with misery and drink, perhaps then crime and disease, dead long in heart, and barely willing to live on in the flesh—ceasing to look upward, ceasing to strike outward, she will passively drift down the stream into that listless state of moral insensibility in which so many pass from this world into the presence of their Judge.

“And here”—I can fancy some reader interrupting—“here ends your catechism. You have led us a painful pilgrimage through the obscure corners behind the scenes of civilized society, casting, by the way, a glare on matters from whose contemplation mature refinement would gladly be spared, and the bare conception of which should be studiously shut out from youth and innocence. At the end of all you show us the heroine of your prurient sympathy overtaken by her doom. We have seen by turns reflected on your mirror the pampered concubine and the common street-walker—the haunts of dissipation and the foul ward; but you dissent from our religious, and at least venerably antique belief, that between these stages there is an organized progression. You cast your lantern ray at last upon a guilty, solitary wreck, perishing, covered with sores, in some back garret, in a filthy court; and you ask us to believe that this is not retribution.”

I do, in truth. For if this fate were general—inevitable, unless by direct intervention of Providence, or arrest of its decree by perverse interposition of science, I might admit the truth of my opponents' creed. But I maintain, on the contrary, that such an ending of the harlot's life

* I must be understood as not attempting to sketch other than oscillatory prostitution. The systematic concubinage which is stated, I believe with truth, to prevail among the lowest class in this city and in the manufacturing districts is an institution out of my scope.

is the altogether rare exception, not the general rule; that the downward progress and death of the prostitute in the absolute ranks of that occupation are exceptional also, and that she succumbs at last, not to that calling, nor to venereal disease, but in due time, and to other maladies common to respectable humanity.

I hope to show fair grounds for these conclusions, and for my opinion that the doors of escape from this evil career are many; that those who have walked in it do eagerly rush through them, neither lingering nor looking behind; that the greatest and most flagrant are not stricken down in the pursuit of sin, nor does the blow fall when it might be of service as an example. If in the following pages I can do something towards this, it may be more justly argued, I think, that an all-wise, all-merciful God has provided these escapes, than that those whom fate overtakes within the vicious circle are selected by His design. And if so, it justly follows that those are less impious and erring, than furthering God's will, who would widen the gates of the fold of penitence and rest, gather by all possible means yet another crop to the harvest of souls, and claim the Christian's noble birthright of rejoicing over more and yet more repentant sinners.

To those who may ask, "What can it matter to us what becomes of them? The subject may be statistically interesting, but no farther. The interests of society demand that a disgusting inquiry should be discouraged, lest by chance the eyes of youth should be polluted;"—I have this much to say. That, the Utopian epoch being long since passed, if indeed it ever had a beginning, when the book of evil could be sealed to the people, it is time that the good and wise, not flinching from the moral pitch, should emulate the evil and the crooked-minded in their attempts to guide the public.

The streets of London are an open book, and very few may walk therein who cannot and will not inquire and read for themselves. Shall those who of right should be commentators for ever leave an open field to the bigotted and the sinful, with the idea of fostering a degree of purity to which the state of society precludes a more than fictitious existence? Shall dirt be allowed to accumulate, only because it is dirt?

A few stubborn figures may perhaps assist the candid reader toward, at least, a partial removal of impressions he may have received, in common with a large portion of the public, as to the causes of mortality among prostitutes.

Some years ago the Registrar-General, Major Graham, with his usual politeness and at considerable trouble, extracted for me (in 1851) the number of deaths ascribable to venereal disease which occurred in the metropolis during the years 1846-7-8, and from them I have compiled the following:—

Table, distinguishing the Males from the Females, their Ages, and the Forms of the Disease of which they died.

	FEMALES.						MALES.						Male and female of all ages.
	15 to 25.	25 to 35.	35 to 45.	45 to 55.	55 to 65.	Of all ages.	15 to 25.	25 to 35.	35 to 45.	45 to 55.	55 to 65.	Of all ages.	
Syphilis	3	12	5	7	2	29	4	4	2	—	4	14	43
Phagedænic disease ...	2	3	—	—	—	5	2	—	—	—	—	2	7
Disease of bone	—	1	1	—	1	3	—	1	—	1	—	2	5
Ulceration of larynx ...	1	2	—	—	—	3	1	5	—	—	—	6	9
Venereal disease	—	3	1	—	—	4	1	2	—	—	—	3	7
Consumption	2	6	1	—	—	9	1	6	—	2	1	10	19
Chest affection... ..	1	2	—	—	—	3	1	1	—	—	1	3	6
Paralysis	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
Cachexia and debility ...	2	2	3	1	—	8	—	—	1	3	—	4	12
Erysipelas	5	1	2	—	—	8	3	5	1	—	—	9	17
All diseases	16	32	13	9	3	73	13	25	4	6	6	54	127

The first thing that strikes the reader here is the paucity of fatal cases. Notwithstanding the frequency of the complaint in the metropolis, as shown in preceding pages, only 127 deaths are noted during 156 weeks, out of a population amounting to more than 2,000,000, or on the average less than one a week.

The above table, I think, disposes of the hypothesis that any large number of females, whether prostitutes or not, die annually of syphilis. It exhibits only 73 women to 54 men; and this proportion is more striking when we consider that the female population of London is to the male as 120 to 100, or six to five.

In order to corroborate my assertions made some years ago, that syphilis was not a fatal disease, I again applied, in May, 1857, to Major Graham, and he kindly forwarded me the annexed table, which is curious as showing how large a proportion of the female mortality from syphilis falls upon infants and children under five years of age:—

Deaths from Syphilis of Females at Different Ages in England and Wales, and in London, in the year 1855.

	England & Wales.	London.
Under one year	269	54
One year	28	4
Two years	11	—
Three years	7	—
Four years	3	1
Total under five years	318	59
Five years	5	—
Ten years	4	1
Fifteen years	16	2
Twenty years	18	3
Twenty-five years	25	2
Thirty years	25	3
Thirty-five years	20	3
Forty years	11	3
Forty-five years	13	1
Fifty years	5	—
Fifty-five years	4	1
Sixty years	3	—
Sixty-five years	1	—
Total, all ages	468	78

Let persons who have been through the syphilitic wards of hospitals call to mind the stamp of women to be seen there. The fact of a girl's seduction generally warrants her possession of youth, health, good looks, and a well-proportioned frame—qualifications usually incompatible with a feeble constitution. She, at least, meets the world with power of resistance beyond the average of women in her station. Notwithstanding all her excesses (and legion is their name), the prostitute passes through the furnace of a dissipated career less worse from wear than her male associates; and when she withdraws from it—as withdraw she will in a few years, for old prostitutes are rarely met with—she is seldom found with her nose sunk in, her palate gone, or nodes upon her shins.

Nay, more, experience teaches that frequently the most violent and fatal cases among women take their rise during the period of comparative innocence, before their adoption of prostitution, and their consequent acquirement of worldly knowledge. I grieve to say that there are systematic seducers so unutterably base as not only to pollute the mind of modest girls, but simultaneously to steep their bodies in most lamentable corruption. Their want of knowledge and ingenious sense of shame induce, in cases such as these, aggravation of suffering from which the experienced prostitute is comparatively exempt.

So rare is death from uncomplicated syphilis, that many a surgeon has never witnessed a single instance; and those attached to hospitals where venereal diseases are specially treated have so few opportunities of witnessing post-mortems of persons who have succumbed to them, that it becomes interesting to inquire how they produced death. This is answered by the return from the Registrar-General. In the first place, erysipelas may attack the sores of *all* patients entering an hospital, and

a certain number of syphilitic patients, as of other classes, die from this cause. Syphilis, therefore, acted but a secondary part in producing the fatal termination of the 17 cases of erysipelas in the above table.

We sometimes, in the present day, meet with death from sloughing phagedæna, but rarely without complication. I lately, for instance, saw it in a man who died, not from its severity, but from debility and loss of blood at stool, which nothing could check, and which was found to depend upon ulceration in the intestines. I have already alluded, at p. 44, to the phagedæna at St. Giles's Workhouse. I find that this form of the disease is now unknown there, and the preceding table records only seven deaths from phagedæna throughout London in three years. Whilst these pages were passing through the press, an epidemic of this affection was spreading to such an extent through the foul wards of St. Bartholomew's Hospital (having already caused the death of, I believe, three women), that the authorities were most reluctantly obliged to close them for a time against syphilitic patients, in order to arrest what might have proved a frightful scourge.

Dr. MacCarthy tells us*—"In Paris, out of nine patients affected with phagedænic serpiginous chancre, four died from the progress of the disease and colliquative diarrhœa, and on opening these I found violent inflammation of the entire colon and rectum, and I observed the mucous membrane sprinkled over with ulcerations. It is not uninteresting to compare this fact with the frequency noted by Dupuytren of the occurrence of ulcerations in persons who have died from the effects of severe burns."

Ormerod mentions† that a patient died at St. Bartholomew's from the giving way of a vessel in the upper part of the vagina.

In the army returns above quoted only two deaths took place in seven years and a quarter; one of these followed from phagedæna and the other from cachexia syphilitica.

In Wild's excellent Table, inserted at p. 49, I find seven deaths reported as having taken place in Vienna; five the result of bubo, probably sloughing; one from sore-throat; and one from general secondary symptoms. Of these, three were males, and only four females.

The whole mortality of prostitutes at St. Lazare, the female venereal hospital at Paris, was but 16 in 1853, and 17 in 1854. The deaths were principally caused by non-syphilitic affections, the germs of which they had contracted before coming into hospital.

In the year 1855, there were 14 deaths at the Lourcine Hospital out of 1384 patients admitted, and of these only one was attributed to syphilis.

But if syphilis be retributive, it would appear to be visited on the children with far greater severity than on the parents; for out of 85 infants, who in 1854 were born at the Lourcine, or, being under two years of age, were admitted with their mothers, I find that no less than 24 perished from its effects. Out of 60 children at the same hospital in 1855, there were 10 deaths.

Death from primary or secondary symptoms is of very rare occur-

* Thesis, p. 17. 1844.

† Clinical Observations.

rence. I do not, in fact, very well see how it could be produced, unless erysipelas, fever, or acute inflammatory disease set in and destroyed the patient.

Syphilis is most frequently fatal when it has reached the tertiary form, in the neglected cases of which we observe its greatest ravages. Patients are destroyed by the deposit of bone, which, pressing on the brain, produces paralysis, convulsions, and other nervous phenomena. In other cases caries of bones takes place, and exhaustion causes death. Occasionally the cartilages of the larynx fall in, and the patient dies asphyxiated. Lastly, the hopeless and intense form of tertiary syphilis, known as syphilitic cachexia, sometimes comes on, and gradually leads to a fatal termination, as in the following instance:—

I was called to see a young girl who was stated to be very ill, at King-street, Islington. I found my poor dispensary patient living in an attic, in one of the small streets off the Lower Road, attended by her mother, without fire or furniture, almost without clothing. She lay, doubled up in the corner of this bare room, on an old mattress stuffed with shavings, with no bed-linen but a thin patched quilt and a few rags. She was covered with rupia, and attenuated to the last degree, though bearing marks of having been a very pretty girl.

She had never left her mother's roof for twenty-four hours; but had nevertheless been seduced, diseased, and deserted—sad and frequent story—and, as long as she was able, had in secret attended at an hospital. Her mother had never left her, and—so *naïve* had she remained in this city of licentiousness—was apparently unaware of the nature of her child's disorder. Never applying to the parish, she had obtained a bare subsistence by her needle, until her ministering office had shut out even this precarious support. She had parted with her every property, till, indeed, no warmth could be obtained except by creeping close together under their miserable counterpane.

At once, seeing the nature of the case, and the impossibility of my being of material service to this poor creature, I spoke of the hospital, but neither mother nor daughter would hear of it; they had never been separated, and never would be. Persuasion was in vain. Assistance was procured; still the debility increased, and I was absolutely obliged to threaten the interference of the parish officers. At last the patient consented to be carried to the hospital, but at such a stage of the complaint this could only be effected with the greatest difficulty. She was, however admitted into St. Bartholomew's, and the comforts which that noble institution so liberally furnishes to its sick, at first caused her to rally, but an immense abscess formed in her thigh, and she sank in a short time under "syphilitic cachexia."

Who could have seen that hapless, unoffending victim to her woman's trust and man's barbarity, hurried to an early grave, without asking himself could such a one have been marked out for example, and for punishment by a discerning Providence, as some would tell us?

I have now furnished the data whence I argue that syphilis is the fate neither of the bulk, nor of an important fraction, of prostitutes; and to meet the hypothesis that, if such is not the fact, they may at least fall victims to suicide, intemperance, or complaints incidental to an irregular course of life, I have made special inquiries among the medical

attendants of hospitals, penitentiaries, as well as well-informed private practitioners, and certain parish authorities. Their replies seem to corroborate my impressions that the combined operation of all these agencies, in addition to venereal complaints, is inadequate to extirpate, as alleged, a generation of prostitutes every few years, and that no other class of females is so free from general disease as this is. I find that in 1840 only 56 women above the age of twenty committed suicide in London, of whom there was no reason to believe that even one-half were prostitutes; and Major Graham states, in a communication he has recently favoured me with, that the female suicides aged twenty and upwards, in the year 1855, numbered only 59.

Parent-Duchâtelet, in treating of Parisian prostitution, was able, as follows, to account for a portion of the mortality among those who died in harness. "It extends," he says, "principally to women between twenty and thirty years of age, whose constitutions have been used up at a great pace by excesses. They say of themselves, that a girl in one of the low houses lasts three years. When we consider that such women are constantly drunk, and that they commit the sexual act from fifteen to twenty times a day, can we be surprised that they cannot hold out for ever?"

So far, so well. The same holds good, in truth, of a class of women in this city, but we know that here, as in Paris, it is extremely restricted. The records of our civil courts have recently proved how hard it is to kill a person of fine constitution, supplied designedly with unlimited liquor and relays of pot companions; and we know again, that by the thorough prostitutes the sexual act is generally performed with the least possible exertion, and that her visitor is not uncommonly himself debauched, and, for the time being, impotent. On the other hand, the same writer again observes: "All that I have said on the chances of contracting disease to which prostitutes are exposed, confirms the truth of the position taken by surgeons and others who have had their charge;—viz, that, notwithstanding all their excesses and exposure to so many causes of disease, their health resists all attacks better than that of the ordinary run of women who have children and lead orderly lives. They have (as some one has remarked) iron bodies, which enable them with impunity to meet trials such as would prove fatal to others."

If we compare the prostitute at thirty-five with her sister, who perhaps is the married mother of a family, or has been a toiling slave for years in the over-heated laboratories of fashion, we shall seldom find that the constitutional ravages often thought to be necessary consequences of prostitution exceed those attributable to the cares of a family and the heart-wearing struggles of virtuous labour.

How then is the disparition of this class of women to be accounted for, as they are neither stricken down in the practice of harlotry, nor by their own hands, nor by intemperance and venereal disease, nor would seem to perish of supervening evils in any notable proportion? Do they fall by the wayside, as some assume, like leaves of autumn, unnoticed and unnumbered, to be heaped up and to rot? Do unknown graves conceal, not keeping green the lost one's memory, and the obscure fallible records of the pauper burials at last confound all clue and chance of tracing her? Is she filtered again into the world through a reformatory? or does she

crawl from the sight of men and the haunts of her fellows to some old homely spot in time to linger and to die?

I have every reason to believe, that by far the larger number of women who have resorted to prostitution for a livelihood, return sooner or later to a more or less regular course of life. Before coming to this conclusion I have consulted many likely to be acquainted with their habits, and have founded my belief upon the following data. Whatever be the cause of a female becoming a prostitute, one thing is certain—before she has carried on the trade four years, she has fully comprehended her situation, its horrors and its difficulties, and is prepared to escape, should opportunity present itself. The constant humiliation of all, even of those in the greatest affluence, and the frequent pressure of want attendant on the vocation of the absolute street-walker, clouding the gaiety of the kept woman, and driving the wedge of bitter reflection into the intervals of the wildest harlot's frenzy, are the agencies which clear the ranks of all but veterans who seem to thrive in proportion to their age.

Incumbrances rarely attend the prostitute who flies from the horrors of her position. We must recollect that she has a healthy frame, an excellent constitution, and is in the vigour of life. During her career, she has obtained a knowledge of the world most probably above the situation she was born in. Her return to the hearth of her infancy is for obvious reasons a very rare occurrence. Is it surprising, then, that she should look to the chance of amalgamating with society at large, and make a dash at respectability by a marriage? Thus, to a most surprising, and year by year increasing extent, the better inclined class of prostitutes become the wedded wives of men in every grade of society, from the peerage to the stable, and as they are frequently barren, or have but a few children, there is reason to believe they often live in ease unknown to many women who have never strayed, and on whose unvitiated organization matrimony has entailed the burden of families.

Others who, as often happens, have been enabled to lay by variable sums of money, work their own reclamation as established milliners, small shop keepers, and lodging-house keepers, in which capacities they often find kind assistance from *ci-devant* male acquaintances, who are only too glad to second their endeavours. Others, again, devote their energies and their savings to preying in their turn, as keepers or *attachées* of brothels and other disorderly establishments, upon the class of male and female victims they themselves have emerged from.

The most prudish will doubtless agree with me, that an important fraction of ex-prostitutes may be accounted for in the last of these categories. Such, indeed—as reformatories of the kind hitherto opened have been notoriously restricted in their operation—has been the customary theoretical disposition of all, or almost all, who were supposed not to die in the ranks or of supervening illnesses. On reflection, too, the reader may, perhaps, acquiesce in some occasional re-entrances into society through the portals of labour. Emigration also, under its present easy conditions, may be admitted to be an outlet to a certain extent.

When, however, I suggest an enormous and continual action of wedlock upon prostitution, I am quite prepared for the smile of incredulity

and the frown of censure from many whose notions of caste, propriety, and so forth, preclude their entertaining for a moment a proposition which would to them appear fraught with scandal, and because scandalous, preposterous. But let me tell the sceptic that this is a matter which, though heretofore it has attracted the attention of a few, will hereafter speak to society as with the voice of a trumpet. "Suum est cui proximus ardet," and few may say how soon or how near the fire may not approach them. The ball is rolling, the Rubicon has been crossed by many who have not been drowned in the attempt, nor found a state of things on the other side more distasteful than compulsory celibacy; and I apprehend that if some of our social marriage enactments are not repealed by acclamation or tacitly, I shall live to see a very large increase in concubinage and the marriages of prostitutes.

There are thousands of fathers, and what is worse, mothers of families, in every rank and occupation of life, who have done much evil, I fear, by the attempt to set up the worship of society in association with that of Mammon. Wholesale dealers in so-called respectability, but screwing out scanty halfpenny-worths of brotherly love, they have passed a marriage code in the joint names of these false divinities, which renders day by day more difficult the union of youth and love unsanctified by money and position. As this goes on, we see more and more of our maidens pining on the stem of single blessedness, more and more of our young men resigning themselves first, for a time, to miscellaneous fornication, then to systematic concubinage, and, of course for all this, none the richer or more eligible in the eyes of society, at last to a *mésalliance*.

I need not enlarge upon the social offence of one who thus practically lessens the number of prostitutes. All reflective men must appreciate in common the sad distress and shame which may accrue to his family, the depravity of his taste, who could consider it a triumph to bear off a battered prize from other competitors, and his insanity, who should dream of avoiding detection, or indulge the hope that, after detection, his false step could be forgotten or forgiven by the world. All can compassionate the temporary weakness of a mind which could esteem the permanent possession of a tainted woman worth the sacrifice of home and social ties. All are at liberty to predict his future sadness, if not misery; though we are apt to err in supposing that the woman purchased at this sacrifice has no affection to return to him, no gratitude, no feeling, no good taste. And, I confess, I have occasionally joined the very worldly and immoral cry against the folly of a man who contrives to make an indissoluble bond of a silken thread which he might have rent at his own will and pleasure—who pays so dearly for the ownership of that which, by a little management, he might have occupied from year to year at will, for next to nothing. These are all every-day platitudes, and unfortunately in such common request that men may gather them at the street corners. I need not tire the reader by their useless amplification, but will briefly touch on a less hackneyed theme—I mean the circumstances which in general prelude such matches, and which, I fancy, will continue to induce them, until the advent of some healthy change in the management of the marriage booth in Vanity Fair.

Take a gentleman, A or B, of any income you please, so it be adequate to the support of two persons, and of any social position—from the *sangre*

azur of May Fair to the "young man" of the East-end warehouse—and you may hear the gossips in society (behind his back, of course) remark, "How very singular it is that So-and-so has never married!" Here is a man in the prime of life, of ascertained position, or with every requisite for success, yet with no apparent intention of what is called "settling." The *commères* are at fault. The medical adviser, chosen probably by A or B because a perfect stranger to the rest of the family, could alone, perhaps, really enlighten them upon points which the principal devoutly conceals from others, not knowing what might turn up, and remembering the every-day truth of the good old saw—*Il y a je ne sais quoi de plaisir dans le malheur d'autrui*. The man, in truth, is settled. For the fact is, often, that though A or B cultivates assiduously the forum, club, counting-house, or the factory—frequents the leisure-haunts where men of his own pursuits most congregate,—dines, smokes, and plays whist with them—appears even, on occasion, in my lady's drawing-room, or at public gatherings—his real bower of rest is in some unpretending retreat, perhaps a suburban cottage, or perhaps a London lodging.

Here lives a lady, of more or less education and refinement—often young and handsome, sometimes of the ambiguous age "de Balzac," and plain but interesting—with or without incumbrances—avowedly widow, wife, or maid, as the case may be. One sees more or less taste and pretension about the establishment according to the means of its master. He, if ostensibly a husband engaged in a profession, will be strictly domesticated at one time, and at another his habits, or other considerations, will induce him to adopt the guise of a travelling merchant, engineer, or other nomad calling, and thus excuse to servants and neighbours his continual absence from home.

If, on the other hand, he visit only in the character of a relative, next friend, trustee, executor of deceased husband, godfather to the children, or what not, the intercourse is necessarily more restricted—less falsehood and trouble are entailed—and both parties are less apprehensive of an *eclaircissement*, and more independent. While tradespeople and servants are well dealt by, the persons concerned are saved the unpleasantness of hearing in the parlour the tittle-tattle which of course takes place at the side-door. The gentleman has obvious reasons against unnecessarily attracting the notice of the world about him; and the female (as contact with her neighbours is inevitable) will generally do her best to gain their respect and avoid all cause of scandal. Little educated, as a matter of course, and generally unaccomplished, she appreciates no literature beyond small journals, smaller stories, and the smallest poetry. Her position with "her friend" and her neighbours, depending on respectable demeanour, she avoids vulgarity, evil company, and the attentions of strange men, and falls back, if childless, upon the domestic pursuits of gardening, needlework, cookery, and scrupulous housewifery. If a mother, she is, as mothers are, devoted—mourning sadly her inefficiency as a trainer, passionately desirous for the respect as well as love of her offspring, as well as solicitous that they shall walk in the way of virtue and propriety.

Now, as years roll on, and the A or B in question gets no younger, he is the less disposed to alter habits that have grown upon him, perhaps, from youth. In the plurality of cases he has been disgusted in society,

or has never cultivated any but that of men. He may even have been crossed in a legitimate love, or have had a proposal *de convenance* thrown back in his teeth. He is sick and tired of an atmosphere of deceit or mystery in which he has spent one-half of his time. He is fond of himself and of ease, and he has found it, affection, and consideration of his every whim, at the hands of this woman—he may really, in course of time, have conceived for her that amount of respect which is necessary to the composition of a perfect love. For his sake, she tells him—sometimes falsely, sometimes truly—she has rejected offers of position. Cases are handy of unfaithful wives legitimately wooed and won—her constancy without the tie should be rewarded. He knows, or maybe thinks he knows, by heart, the woman who has shared his bed and board for years, while he argues that all regular courtships are no better than tedious shams—a series of organized impositions on both sides—and that marriage *à la mode* is a lottery. His inclinations sometimes even press conscience into an alliance, and conscience seems to say it must be wrong to cast from his bosom down the winds of fortune the woman whose attractions he had enjoyed while the days of her youth sped from her, without a thought bestowed by either of them on her future. Maybe she has children—to whom he is much attached—and shall he?—no! he will not send them illegitimate upon the world. He could do nothing less than keep them all, whatever came to pass; and if he married suitably, their very life would be a cloud upon his future. He asks himself, Has he philosophy to break the chain if a reputable marriage were open to him? And inclination replying—as she sometimes does—in the negative, conscience warns him not to peril the happiness of a wife, besides his own and his paramour's. Considerations such as these combine at length, and deepen into a quasi-religious conviction, which is little to be wondered at where a man has been the original seducer of his mistress; and which, wondrous or not, very frequently operates—especially where the latter is a woman of tact—to change the most irregularly contracted *liaison* into the indissoluble bond of marriage.

The above arguments are capable of a thousand combinations, with some of which men of all ranks and temperaments are apt to back up their inclinations, and attempt the after-justification of their proceedings. There are, however, many other marriages of this description susceptible of no defence, which, originating in a very different manner, are planned at haste, and produce their bitter fruit, sometimes forthwith, sometimes at leisure.

A banished prodigal, a spendthrift greenhorn, a discarded lover, will often rush headlong into matrimony to provoke his respectable relatives, to spite his mistress, or in a frenzy of jealousy and intoxication. I have known a man of family, position, and fortune carry a prostitute to church almost against her will, and reckless of all consequences—without the slightest prospect of ever gaining her affections, but in the mere mad hope of securing her person from his rivals. I have known a month's acquaintance, born at a casino, nourished at Vauxhall, to terminate at the altar of St. George's, with little other object in the maniac bridegroom's head than to add fresh fuel to the fire of a father's anger, and "to do," as he said, "something worth a shilling legacy." I have known a man—of taste and elegance before his lunacy—take for better or worse

a thorough strumpet, that he might wound more deeply still a virtuous heart he had already withered. The annals of the class could tell us of the man of fashion who ran the passionate tradesman neck and neck for the possession of their common favourite—how he only won her by the wedding-ring—and how his disconsolate rival took to poetry and travel. Full many a simpleton has conceived a passion in course of a night's debauch which, needing no spur of rivalry or spite, could not be assuaged except by marriage in hot haste, without even a preliminary state of probation.

If "society" would consider the numberless and inscrutable phases of which this marriage mania is susceptible—the beauty, and often the shrewdness of the women—the immense concourse of marriageable males at the height of their passions, who, from various causes, seek female society more in the streets than in the boudoir, and who are, at the same time, utterly deficient in physico-moral training—it would, as I do, marvel less at the occasional explosion of these flagrant cases than at their rarity.

The following case is, of course, violently exceptional; but it is no less true that, some time back, a gentleman of family, on his road to a county jail, to which he had been committed for misdemeanour, invited and accepted the recommendation of a wife from the driver of the vehicle. He absolutely married her, led subsequently a miserable life, and is since dead. This painful story needs no illustration, and no comment.

I speak advisedly—and many persons of experience will bear me out—when I state my firm belief that hardly a prostitute in London has not, at some period of her career, an opportunity of marriage almost always above her original station. It is no rare occurrence for a woman comparatively public to have one or two lovers on her list, who, with a full knowledge of her situation, will hold their hands for a length of time at her disposal. She will keep them dangling, as her betters do their swains, while she sows her wild oats, from a reluctance to desert some more cherished acquaintance who will not or cannot afford to marry, or some wealthy admirer from whom she may have, not merely income, but expectations.

A friend of mine was some time ago attending a very ladylike person, living in the first style. She was well known to be unmarried, and to receive the attentions of three gentlemen, of whom two had considerable property, while the third, although well placed, was not so well off. From an affection of the uterus, her health declined; and, after some ineffectual attempts at cure, she was advised that her recovery must depend upon the dismissal of her lovers and the adoption of an extremely quiet life. I am not prepared to detail the mechanism of the plot; but suffice it to say, that when I next heard of this lady, she was rid for ever of two of her lovers, and had married the last, to whom she was an excellent and affectionate wife.

There are individuals who, from sheer idleness, nervousness, want of leisure or of wit, prefer the sociability, ample choice, and facility of making acquaintance which characterize the dancing-master's "select assemblies," to the straightness and frigidity of more orthodox avenues to matrimony. And it must be remembered—as I am speaking of all conditions of men—that such gatherings as would appear to the higher

orders to be thoroughly promiscuous, are, in the eyes of a very large number of our young people, as genteel and select, and to others as inaccessible, as are Almack's balls to the bulk of the middle classes. They are certainly as well conducted, generally speaking. And thus a fraction of the shoals of amiable girls, whose fall from modesty has been achieved by the kind of "gentlemen" who regularly prowl in search of prey at such assemblies and the pleasure gardens, very prudently gather, *en revanche*, the flower of safety from the self-same bed of nettles, and, withdrawing in time from the outskirts of prostitution and the prospective horrors of the absolute *pavé*, make excellent wives to men, sometimes in, and often above their own rank of life, who, being unconscious of their antecedents, neither suffer in mind nor can aggravate any after difficulties by cruel and unavailing reproach.

The ranks of prostitution, again, are to some extent reduced by men who, not exactly in search of wives, are yet prepared for marriage, and flutter, as do moths about a light, round the Circes of the marine parade, the boarding-house, the *pension-bourgeoise*, and the table-d'hôte—Circes for whom the education-mongers have contracted (on a somewhat sandy base) to set one up complete with deportment and accomplishments to match. The fate of such a bachelor, who should too long dally at Florence, Paris, Baden, Tours, Boulogne, or Brighton, among the elegant and experienced company I have seen there, is like the egg-trick of the conjuror Columbus—no problem when found out. Matches like these, of course not every day, but not uncommonly, relieve the pocket and the conscience of some ancient lover, and make a pair of speculators indifferently happy.

I remember a very laughable one, improvised at a water-cure, between a notorious dilapidated fortune-hunter and a pretended officer's widow. Appearances justified each in considering the other a capitalist. The wedding was splendid and charming—the honeymoon gay and expensive; but when the hour of payment came, their resources turned out to be an accurately fashionable toilette on either side, and a joint income of 150*l.* a year. The lady's share had been settled recently upon her by an admirer of her younger days, and the gentleman's was a life-interest. The explosion was painful; but these defeated adventurers, after chafing at the collar for a while, very wisely joined their talents for the common good, and make a head against the world, I hear, successfully.

Nor is the union of the wealthy man's dependant with the pensioned mistress, by consent of all three, by any means less common in the world than is represented in plays and story-books. Upon the temperament and original social position of the female, and also the degree of luxury in which she has lived, must depend the position to which she will stoop; for it may be relied on she will, to all appearance, be the condescending party. The gentleman's means and sympathy naturally fix the limit to his generosity, and decide the style of husband purchasable. As men of every grade, and with every sort of maintenance at their disposal, from the Government clerkship to the gamekeeper's lodge, have every year to disembarass themselves of ties such as we speak of—nothing, I confess, seems to me more proper than that the suitor *ex machinâ*, who (having had perhaps his own full share of trouble) can set at rest two uneasy consciences, and the anxieties, it may

be, of a whole family without violence to his own feelings, should be very handsomely provided for. Nothing seems more natural than that he should, if possible, be quartered upon the public—failing that, upon the family estate, or the business—or last of all, be set up in a cigar-shop, an inn, or “the general line” in a country village. The transaction is not blazoned in the columns of the “Morning Post,” nor announced by sound of bell at the market-cross; and, with a world of excuses to choose from, it is hard if the actors in this venial plot cannot account for their parts so as to answer all but that impertinent curiosity which at once encourages and richly merits deception.

As long as such events occur, they were better not made needlessly public property; but their number is certainly too important to be discarded from such a calculation as mine.

It is, I believe, an undisputed, though perhaps unparalleled, anecdote, that a once celebrated sporting character, who, with a well-intentioned view to some such ultimate disposal of a person he was connected with, and mindful, too, how fugitive are speculative gains and good intentions, had made a considerable settlement upon her—was not sorry, in an after time of pressure, to re-acquire, as husband, the funds he had placed beyond his own control by the fortunate liberality of more prosperous days.

It is no uncommon thing, again, for the smart London girl, who has contrived to maintain some relations with her home—and I never heard of one who did not cherish in her heart of hearts that tie—to go occasionally on a visit of sufferance to her country friends. The virtuous sisters, or the stepmother, who would ruthlessly close the door against the penitent, will yet permit their dulness to be enlivened for awhile, perhaps even under protest of some members of the family, by the bearer of new London scraps and fashions. “My daughter,” or “my sister from town,” is—for all the neighbours know—a milliner’s improver, a nursery governess, or a lady’s companion. Lively, well-dressed, a first-rate dancer, and as modest-looking as the best, she not unfrequently attracts a country suitor, whom she may accept at once, or bind to an apprenticeship, while she takes a parting sip at the cup of pleasure, and fortifies her good resolutions by a little more dissipation and a little more trouble. Another campaign, too, may give the opportunity of a little diplomatic arrangement for a settlement or a *bonne main*, according to the style of subsisting connexions.

I can by no means close this lengthy analysis of prostitution-marriage without including the very imaginable category of matches for love on both sides; and protesting against the vulgar error which denies susceptibility of love to the woman of pleasure. The “Arthur” of French light literature, the man for whom she keeps what heart she may, while her person is public, is not so common a personage here as elsewhere, because the independence of the English character will not suffer such youths as a gay woman of pretension would adopt, to step forward as candidates for her unpurchased affection; but it may be relied on that the story of the much-abused *Dame aux Camelias* is, I might almost say, an every-day one. I have seen a London sultana, whose expenditure could not be less than from two to three thousand a year, and the future of whose children only partially provided for, cut off by degrees all her superfluities and luxuries, as her affection for a poor merchant’s clerk

made her craft from day to day more distasteful, and forced her to cashier, one by one, her opulent admirers; and in my opinion, half the wildest women in our town would, to the extent of their power, go half way, and farther, to meet the genuine love of any man. The prostitute knows well enough to distinguish the furious evanescent flame of an emancipated schoolboy, or the business-like indifference of the practised man about town, from the passionate affection and sympathy which chance sometimes brings to her feet. Should she herself conceive the flame, what wonder can there be that with the terrible sword of jealousy ever ready to her hand, beside all the smaller weapons of the female arsenal, she should gain any amount of ascendancy where she would not wed; and where she would, a rapid victory over every consideration of reason and expediency.

It may, I dare say, be objected that in preceding pages I have lent myself to a gross slander upon the public at large, by setting at so grievous a discount the popular estimation of virtue and propriety. But it is not to a fervid imagination, but hard memory and the experience of our profession, that I owe the preceding facts and analysis; and, when I reconsider what I have written, I confess I can see no single statement or opinion that can surprise the major part of readers conversant with London, although their juxtaposition be new, and favour startling inferences. If we consult the experiences of the clergy, who are the best of authorities upon the social condition of both urban and manufacturing communities; or men who, like the Brothers Mayhew,* have sifted to the dregs the lower orders in capital cities, and in this metropolis particularly, we find that female honour by no means holds its theoretical position in public esteem.† In parts of the manufacturing and mining districts, again, where the infant labour produces an early addition to the parents' resources, it is considered unthrifty and unnecessary to marry a woman who has not given evidence of fertility. She who cannot at least show fair prospect of adding young piecers, tenters, or hurriers, as well as her own person, to the common stock, is no better than an unproductive incumbrance. "If thou houd'st, I wed thee; if thou doesn't, thou'rt none the' waur," is a north country proverb, familiar enough to many southerners, and acted upon to an immense extent, as I have been repeatedly and seriously informed by reliable authorities.‡

* On the last day of the last week of the first quarter of 1854, there were 13,893 able-bodied women in the workhouses in England and Wales. Of these, 1904 were of dissolute and abandoned character, and 3593 were mothers of illegitimate children, but were not of dissolute or abandoned habits. The estrays of women which bore fruit, and were avowed by registration of the infants, were in 1852 no less than 55,000. I should imagine that if the cases of seduction-bastardy not brought to light through non-registration, unfruitfulness, miscarriages, and abortions could be calculated, their numbers would be as three to one of those which transpired as above.

† Mr. Mayhew says but one in twenty of the "street folk" who live as man and wife are married. The couples of the working population who cohabit in town are not married, and in many agricultural provinces cohabitation before marriage is systematic, and a matter of public understanding.

‡ I am not speaking on my own authority, but on that of credible witnesses, when I say that in a midland county, families are unable to keep female domestics virtuous for any length of time; and I am able of my own experience to assert that in the home counties the same occurs, and that the best of servants are often found among those who have children to support.

It is within the memory of politicians, that among the causes of the change in the bastardy clauses of the old Poor Law, was the prevalent fact, that a woman who had had several children, perhaps by different men, was in some parts of the country considered a more eligible match than the virtuous village girl who had no fruit of sin to her marriage portion; and the numbers of our lower orders whom the philanthropic clergy have found willing to accept of gratuitous marriage, but who adhered pertinaciously to concubinage until the Church gave up her fees, demonstrates clearly enough that the equivalent of a few gallons of beer consumed during the honeymoon, suffices with their order to kick the beam between morality and immorality, religion and irreligion, decency and indecency, present gratification and care for the future.

How little can these men prize the honour of wives or the credit of offspring—how little these females thought of their virtue, or of the rights of married women, the non-appreciation of maidenhood, the ramification of prostitution. The more I reflect on these things, the more am I convinced that vast masses from top to bottom of our people, have not the proper poetical or theoretical appreciation of female virtue, and are, at present, most indifferent to those laws of society and religion by which they are supposed to be swayed. I am of opinion that these masses must, and obviously may be, dealt with by statesmen for their good, but constitutionally, and as far as they are concerned, without the slightest fear of jarring with an imaginary refinement which they do not possess.

Prostitution diffuses itself through the social fabric, though it is perceptible for a time only, as is the moorland stream which stains but for a space the bluest river. The masses I have spoken of, then, and those who to the third and fourth generation may have a concern in the actual harlot of to-day, are by far too great and important that they or their interests should be ignored or set aside, only through fear of grating on the fanciful belief of poetical men and ladylike politicians, or breaking down their plaster images of a perfectly genteel and virtuous polity. True religion says this must not be.

There are persons who deem the Haymarket and the Argyll Rooms—because, I presume, being adjacent to the Opera House, these places come betwixt the wind and their fine susceptibilities—at once the Alpha and the Omega of prostitution, and would exterminate the vice and its practitioners at one fell swoop, by a bonfire, in the Regent Circus. These will clamour, that the evil is over-magnified when each harlot is called a harlot, because this enlargement of the field of operations puts an end to all nonsensical proposals of high-handed suppression. I use none but their own weapons, when I marshal in the ranks of prostitution each woman who, in a pure society, would properly be so construed. But the accumulation to be dealt with thus becomes so frightful, that all who can read and think will agree with me, that management and regulation of “the greatest social evil” by the bâton or the pillory, grateful though it might be to Exeter Hall, would be neither effective nor perhaps politic.

The hand of an Englishman should be as withered before it advocated the forcible suppression of this vice, as must be the foolish brain that could plot it. Virtue and vice, as we all know, are no subjects for

enactment. To protest against the latter's concentration is futile and absurd as to argue against the herding of nobles or *parvenues*, tradesmen or manufacturers, criminals or paupers. Secrecy would be more fraught than publicity with danger to individuals and the public; diffusion would be lunacy on grounds both of morals and policy. The existing regulations are adequate for public protection and order, which are all the judicious can at present hope for; for anything farther in that direction we are certainly not prepared. The Home Secretary who should attempt any thing like coercion would soon have his hands full indeed. We are already *policés* enough—we are, indeed, already on the verge of excess. The shivering scorn with which the million utterly unaffected by the measure he was advocating, received the Puritan legislator's prescription of a "six-pounders tail on the pavement," as a plaster for public discontent, should be a lesson, "when found to be made a note of," by such as would play incautiously with the screw of power.

I repeat that prostitution is a transitory state, through which an untold number of British women are ever on their passage. Until preventive measures, previously hinted at, to which I shall presently refer, shall have been considerably adopted—and thereafter, too, if needful, for I am no nostrum-monger—it is the duty, and it should be the business of us all, in the interest of the commonwealth, to see these women through that state, so as to save harmless as much as may be of the bodies and souls of them. And the commonwealth's interest in it is this—that there is never a one among all of these whose partners in vice may not some time become the husbands of other women, and fathers of English children; never a one of them but may herself, when the shadow is past, become the wife of an Englishman and the mother of his offspring; that multitudes are mothers before they become prostitutes, and other multitudes become mothers during their evil career. If the race of the people is of no concern to the State, then has the State no interest in arresting its vitiation. But if this concern and this interest be admitted, then arises the necessity for depriving prostitution not only of its moral, but of its physical venom also. The means I will hereafter speak of.

CHAPTER VII.

POLICE SUPERVISION ABROAD AND AT HOME.

I CANNOT venture to hope that the sexual passion will in our time cease to operate or diminish very materially. I have no idea that the preventives of prostitution hereafter suggested, will, if adopted at all, operate otherwise than tardily, and after all incompletely. It becomes us, then, to consider what curatives or palliatives are at our disposal. Having already attempted to depict, not extravagantly, the present external aspect of the vice, and the interest of society in its being well ordered, I will now glance at its organization, and the possibility of our regulating it by law, or mitigating its attendant evils.

It will be necessary, therefore, concisely to set out the modes of life and behaviour prescribed to a portion of their prostitutes by the police of continental States, and also those which prevail among them here. A notice of the state of our own law, and of the difficulties which arise when our authorities attempt any move in the direction of pressure, may something help the reader, who, having perused and thought upon the foreign systems, may wish to form his own judgment as to how far such could be conveniently applied to the street-demeanour, amusements, and domiciliary arrangements of prostitutes in this country. I have long sought the opportunity which now offers of throwing out a few suggestions for future elaboration by wiser heads and more competent hands than my own. I may be misunderstood or misinterpreted, and the crudeness in which want of time, and it may be of capacity, have naturally left my ideas on the subject, may lead to their rejection as absurdities in quarters where I should prefer their favourable reception. But I also hope that among the many benevolent and influential persons under whose notice these pages may chance to come, some may be found who, alive to the interests of society and the demands of public order, may see their way to advance those interests, and comply, at least partially, with those demands, without deepening the misfortunes of the class or trenching upon the liberties of us all.

We may here at once discard from our calculation the class of females who live in a state of concubinage. Their ill effect upon society, as long as they remain in that category, is moral, not physical. They do not, or according to my theory previously illustrated, they very rarely descend into the grade of public supply, but are, even on the Continent, and still more in this country, utterly beyond the reach of medical or public police supervision. The depravation of public health and the national power are more traceable to the young clandestine prostitution

and the promiscuous class who practice, from year's end to year's end, for five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years of their lives, in a chronic or intermittent state of unsoundness.

The hardened common prostitute, when overtaken by disease, pursues her trade, as a general rule, uninterruptedly, spreading contagion among men, in spite of her own pain, that she may live and avoid debt, until positively obliged to lay up for medical treatment in lodgings or in an hospital. It is from this class that society may be prepared for, if not expect, contempt and danger to public order and decency; and over them the police of foreign countries have established the partial control which I shall presently describe. As these regulations are as vaguely comprehended in this country as their adoption is frequently invoked for our own relief, I think it as well to be somewhat diffuse upon them, for the convenience of such as take an interest in these matters.

SYNOPSIS OF FRENCH REGULATIONS.

I may as well premise by observing that the authorities of Paris by no means pretend to have established a control over the whole prostitution of that city. The *concubinaires* they cannot reach. The large sections of superior professional prostitutes, whom the French term *femmes galantes* and *lorettes*, evade them, as do also vast hordes of the lowest class of strumpets who throng the low quarters and the villages of the Banlieu. I should have mentioned under the head "Extent," that M. Antin, an official of the Assistance-Publique, estimated in 1856 that there were 20,000 females in Paris having no other ostensible means of subsistence, on whom a tax in aid of retreats from prostitution might be levied. He assumed that 10,000 of this number could be rated at an annual contribution of fifty francs; 5000 at eighty francs; 3500 at 100 francs; 1500 at 200 francs—yielding in all 1,550,000 francs.

It appears that, the then existing statutes being too cumbrous to check the flagrancy of prostitution, the following simple and expeditious police decree was devised, in 1778, to strengthen the hands of the authorities. Although partially repealed, it is the last operative enactment on the subject, and is, as will be seen, the basis of the existing regulations:—

ART. I.—No debauched women and girls to solicit in the streets, on the quays, squares and public walks, and boulevards of this city of Paris, even from windows, under pain of being shaven and locked up, and in case of a second offence, of corporal punishment, as provided in previous ordinances, decrees, and regulations.

ART. II.—No owners and occupiers of houses to underlet to, or harbour in their houses, persons of other than good conduct, morals, and repute, or to permit within the same any cover for debauchery, under penalty of 400 francs.

ART. III.—All such owners and occupiers of houses as aforesaid, whereinto loose women have been introduced, to make a declaration within twenty-four hours before the commissary of the quarter, against him or her who has so imposed upon them, to the end that, on report of the fact by the said commissary, the delinquents may be fined 400 francs, or even specially proceeded against.

ART. IV.—No person, of whatsoever calling or condition, to underlet, by the day, week, fortnight, month, or other term, any chamber or furnished place, to debauched women or girls, or directly or indirectly to take part in any such hiring, under penalty of 400 francs.

ART. V.—All persons letting hotels, furnished houses, and lodgings, by the month, fortnight, week, day, &c., to inscribe forthwith, day by day, and without blanks, the name, surname, quality, birth-place, and ordinary domicile of each lodger, upon a police register which they shall keep for the purpose, to be checked by the commissaries of their respective quarters; not to harbour in such hotels, houses, or lodgings, any persons without ostensible description, or women or girls who have recourse to prostitution; to keep separate apartments for men and women; not to permit men to occupy private rooms with women calling themselves married, except after exhibition by them of their marriage certificate, or their written identification by known and respectable persons, under penalty of 200 francs.

Signed by the Lieutenant of Police,

16th November, 1778.

LENOIR.

This ordinance, which was soon found to be too strong for itself, amounting as it did, in fact, to a prohibition of illicit intercourse, was set at nought by the public and all concerned, who boldly faced the crusades of zealous officials, and were regarded as martyrs when convicted. It was subsequently swept off at the Revolution, and prostitution became rampant.

It is true that a law was passed in July, 1791, which addressed itself to the suppression of procuration; but its framers, doubtless mindful of the spirit of the times, prudently avoided the subject of prostitution, and this one, therefore, among other vices of Paris, being relieved from all the restraints which anterior ordinances had imposed upon it, very shortly achieved the frightful eminence which is a matter of history, and to check which the Directory and the Council of Five Hundred were loudly called on by the voice of public opinion to interpose. The President of the Directory, Rewbell, drew up a powerful appeal to the latter body, inviting them to legislate for the suppression of the disorder which menaced public morality. The embarrassing nature of the subject, however, imported into the document a proposition of so singular a nature, considering its source, as to be worth extraction. It may also, if my view be correct that it is a suggestion of a secret police, form an additional aid to the reflections of the advocates of strong measures in our own country.

"It is our duty to submit one observation more. It appears to us essential that your treatment should prescribe a form of process which shall exempt police inspectors and agents from the inconvenience of being called as witnesses against such of the accused, or their vagabond hangers-on, whom they may happen to know; the result of which would be to neutralize the action of zealous agents of police, through the persecution and insult they would undergo when charges were dismissed for want of sufficient evidence, and the personal danger they would incur in the course of their investigations."

Nothing was done until 1796, when the newly-instituted prefecture

of police took the matter in hand, and a *projet de loi* was prepared, but fell through. The same thing occurred again and again. Napoleon the First, who had private reasons for moving in the matter, was compelled to act arbitrarily. Since his time the law of July, 1791, has remained the only authority and cover for the proceedings of the Executive in this regard; and an opinion has always prevailed in certain quarters that these were more sanctioned by expediency and the *force majeure* of bureaucracy than by legality.

The Prefect Pasquier, towards the close of the first Empire, actively engaged in a code of regulations, which never came to the foot of the throne. In 1816, when, after the occupation of Paris, the morality of the city was at a low ebb, and venereal diseases at their maximum, some plans for regulating prostitution were entertained by men in office; but it being ruled, at the instance of the Minister of Police, that the 484th article of the penal code gave the administrators of justice powers amply sufficient for the restraint of excess, the agitation dropped. The words of this clause (and I have preserved in my translation the ambiguity of the original) are as follows:

“With regard to subjects not touched by the present code, to which special laws and regulations apply, the courts and tribunals will continue to observe them.”

It is argued by some French juriconsults that the only ancient enactment bearing upon the question, and capable of being revived by this article, that of 1788, having been abrogated at the period of the Revolution, and the penal code being otherwise silent upon the subject, is that of 1791 above cited. But this being in fact directed only against private debauchery of minors, &c., and not against public prostitution, the latter form of vice is absolutely unprovided for, and the present system pretending to be based upon the statute and buttressed by the penal code, is in point of fact an illegal excrescence. Eighteen months afterwards, on receipt of applications for some model regulations for provincial cities, the prefect of police, Anglès, drew up a paper on the whole subject, which he wound up as follows:—

“Sooner or later the principle of individual liberty must triumph, and prostitution must become, under the shadow of general principles, as unrestricted as any other commerce; or, legislation explicitly admitting distinctions and exceptions, must place under the eye of the magistracy charged with the protection of morality and order, such characters as, by their attitude and the depravity of their sentiments, are in continual opposition to religion, morals, good order, and the interest of society.”

In 1819, the Government commissioned the advocates, Masson and Billecoq, to draw a Bill for the Chambers, which had no result. In 1822, again, a new law was contemplated, but no more; and to the present day the question has not been again mooted. The police administration has pursued its way in perfect conviction of rectitude, and of course without questioning the legality or illegality of its own proceedings.

The official registration of common prostitutes was first loosely set on foot in 1765, and re-organized in 1796, under the Convention. Through neglect it was inoperative until 1801; then, after reorganization, it fell gradually into desuetude until 1816, when the present mechanism was

adopted, and has undergone slight change, except in 1828, when exhibition of her *acte de naissance* was first demanded of each person presenting herself for inscription, and the poll-tax was abolished.

The keepers of licensed houses acted formerly also as agents in collecting women into the grasp of the authorities; but this has been suppressed on obvious grounds, that if it were permitted they would become purveyors.* The registration is now either on the voluntary demand of the female, or by requisition of the *Bureau des Mœurs*. On appearing before this tribunal, the candidate, after declaring her name, age, quality, birth-place, occupation, and domicile, is submitted to a searching examination, as follows. Is she married or single? Has she father and mother living, and what are their pursuits? Does she reside with them; if not, why not, and when did she leave them? Has she children? How long has she inhabited Paris, and can she be owned there? Has she ever been arrested, and if so, the particulars? Has she previously been a prostitute; if so, the details? Has she had any, and what, education? Has she had any venereal affection? Her motives for the step?

She next proceeds to the *Bureau Sanitaire*, is medically examined, and enrolled in that department. If found diseased, she is consigned to the Saint-Lazare Hospital forthwith. Steps are meanwhile taken to verify her replies at the *Bureau des Mœurs*, and formal communications are now made to the mayor of her native commune, with an appeal for the woman's redemption to her parents. I present a copy of the latter, which is of course slightly varied if a female has voluntarily presented herself for examination:—

“MONSIEUR—

“Votre fille âgée de , a été arrêtée le pour fait de débauche” (*if diseased*, “et placée à l'infirmerie de Saint-Lazare afin d'y recevoir les soins que sa santé exige.”)

“On l'a invitée à retourner près de vous, mais elle s'y est refusée bien qu'il lui ait été offert passeport gratuit avec secours de route.

“Je vous prie, en conséquence, de me faire connaître quels moyens vous comptez employer pour assurer son retour (en cas de maladie après guérison) au cas où vous ne pourriez venir la chercher vous même ou charger une personne sûre du soin de vous la renvoyer.”

Should the relatives of the girl be willing to receive her, she is remitted to them at the public cost. She, however, frequently refuses to disclose them, or is ignorant of their existence, and it rarely occurs that they reclaim her. If, as has happened, she be a virgin or a minor, she is consigned to a religious establishment. Should spleen or despair cause the step, and she show symptoms of good qualities, immediate attempts are made to change her intention, and she is often sent home, or placed in a reformatory at the public cost. If her parents reside in Paris they are communicated with. All, in fact, that the *Bureau des Mœurs* can do, I should in justice say, I believe to be done, to warn

* The *maisons de tolérance* are nevertheless recruited, in fact, through the exertions, and at the cost of their keepers, from hospitals and other sources in the capital, and by agency and correspondence from the departments and Belgium.

and restrain the female about to enrol herself in the ranks of public prostitution, and only when all has failed is the formality complied with. This formality, which takes the form of a colourable contract or covenant between the prostitute and the authorities, would seem to argue a sort of consciousness on the part of the latter of the entire illegality of the proceedings throughout. It runs as follows :—

“ L’an _____, pardevant nous, commissaire de police,
bureau _____, s’est présentée pour être inscrite comme
fille publique, la nommée _____, native de _____,
département d _____, demeurant à Paris, No. _____,
enregistrée d’après décision du _____, laquelle, instruite par
nous des règlements sanitaires établis par la prefecture, pour les filles de
cette classe, nous déclare s’y soumettre, et s’engage, en conséquence, à
subir les visites periodiques de MM. les médecins du dispensaire de salu-
brité, promettant de se conformer strictement à toutes les règles pre-
scrites pour la surveillance.

“ Le Commissaire de Police,

“ D——.

“ En foi de quoi elle a signé.”

This over, the individual is presumed at liberty to select the category of prostitution in which she will be comprehended. If she is totally destitute, or any arrangement to this effect had been previously entered into, she is registered to a certain licensed house, to whose licensed proprietress she becomes a marked and numbered serf or chattel, to be used or abused, within certain limitations, at discretion. If she has command of capital enough to furnish a lodging of her own, she is provided with a ticket, or *carte*, of which I append a translation :

185 { <i>Here are entered her name, age, general appearance, residence, &c.</i>				
18—.	First fortnight.	Signature of medical officer.	Second fortnight.	Signature of medical officer.
January ...				
February ...				
March				
April				
May				
June				
July				
August ...				
September				
October ...				
November				
December...				

On the reverse of which are printed the following

Obligations and Restrictions imposed on Public Women.

“Public women, *en carte*, are called upon to present themselves at the dispensary for examination, once at least every fifteen days.

"They are called upon to exhibit this card on every request of police officers and agents.

"They are forbidden to practise the calling during daylight, or to walk in the thoroughfares until at least half-an-hour after the public lamps are lighted, or at any season of the year before seven o'clock, or after eleven, P.M.

"They must be simply and decently clad, so as not to attract attention by the richness, striking colours, or extravagant fashion of their dress.

"They must wear some sort of cap or bonnet, and not present themselves bareheaded.

"They are strictly forbidden to address men accompanied by females or children, or to address loud or anxious solicitations to any person.

"They may not, under any pretext whatever, exhibit themselves at their windows, which must be kept constantly closed and provided with curtains.

"They are strictly forbidden to take up a station on the foot-pavement, to form, or walk together, in groups, or to stand in a narrow space, or to allow themselves to be attended or followed by men.

"The neighbourhood of churches and chapels, within a radius of twenty-five yards, the arcades and approaches of the Palais Royal, the Tuileries, the Luxembourg, and the Jardin des Plantes, are interdicted.

"The Champs Elysées, the Terrace of the Invalides, the exterior of the Boulevards, the quays, the bridges, and the more unfrequented and obscure localities are alike forbidden.

"They are especially forbidden to frequent public establishments or private houses where clandestine prostitution might be facilitated, or to attend *tables-d'hôte*, reside in boarding-houses, or exercise the calling beyond the quarter of the town they reside in.

"They are likewise strictly prohibited from sharing lodgings with a kept woman, or other girl, or to reside in furnished lodgings at all without a permit.

"Public women must abstain when at home from anything which can give ground for complaints by their neighbours, or the passers-by.

"Those who may infringe the above regulations, resist the agents of authority, or give false names or addresses, will incur penalties proportioned to the gravity of the case."

To recapitulate, then; the public women called *filles soumises*, *inscrites*, or *enregistrées*, over whom the *Bureau des Mœurs* of the prefecture of police has cast its net, are divided into two categories:—

1. Domiciled in, and registered to certain licensed houses, for whom the keepers of those houses are responsible.

2. Free prostitutes, who are responsible to the authorities direct.

The first, or *filles des maisons*, are known at the Bureaux by their number, and that of the house to which they are *inscrites*, and are termed by themselves *filles à numero*. Their health is inspected by the official medical staff, at the house of their inscription, once in every week. The second form two sub-classes—viz., women who have their own apartment and furniture, and others who, by special permit, live in furnished lodgings, &c. To all of these, who are termed *filles à carte*, or by the police *isolées*, a *carte*, or bill of health, from time to time

is supplied, to which the *visa* of the medical officer of the *Bureau Sanitaire* is affixed at the health inspections for which they present themselves once every fifteen days, in compliance with obligation 1.

This sanitary department was placed upon its present footing in 1828. The medical staff consists of ten superior and ten assistant surgeons, and the number of inspections in 1854 was :—

At the dispensary	97,626
At the registered houses	53,404
At the dépôt of the prefecture (which answers to a } first-class police station here)	4,777
	155,807

The inspection, for which the speculum is very frequently used, is performed with all the delicacy consistent with accuracy, and great despatch; the average time occupied being three minutes, which includes filling up the papers. The total number inscribed upon the register of the *Administration des Mœurs* at the close of the year 1854, was 4260, showing an increase of 515 only over 3745, the number registered in December, 1833. Of these, 1502 were *numérotées*, or attached to the houses, and the other 2758 were free, or *isolées*.

The same policy which considers the registration of the prostitute indispensable to public order, dictates the exercise of considerable caution in liberating her from supervision. The formalities which attend what is termed the authorized “radiation” are numerous and strict. The petition must invariably be in writing, and supported by evidence of an intention really and truly to abandon the mode of life. The corroborative demand of an intending husband; of parents or relatives who will be responsible for future conduct; in certain well-authenticated cases, that of one who will secure her as a mistress against future want; or a medical certificate of inability to continue prostitution, all command respect and action, more or less immediate. But the mere profession of changed sentiments is treated with suspicion, and a probation of two or three months under private surveillance is insisted upon. The prayer is granted only on its being made clear that it results from something more than an *intention passagère*, or disgust at the inspection—that means of honest support are more than probably forthcoming, and that public order and salubrity will not be jeopardized by the reappearance of the petitioner as an *insoumise* upon the public streets.

The authorized annual radiation during the ten years ending 1854, averaged 258, of whom 24 per annum became wives. The unauthorized averaged 725, and the recaptures 450 per annum, respectively.

The Parisian *maisons de tolérance*, formerly called *bordels* (hence the English word brothel), in which prostitutes are lodged gregariously, are, generally speaking, under the most complete supervision of the police. Numerous formalities must be gone through before a licence is granted by the *Bureau des Mœurs*, and stringent regulations must be complied with under inexorable penalties. The houses must be confined to the one purpose, excepting in the Banlieu, where, from the impossibility of exercising perfect control, and other considerations, a dispensation is granted to deal, during pleasure, in liquor and tobacco. They may not exist near places of worship, public buildings, schools, furnished hotels,

or important factories. They may not be on a common staircase. They are not allowed to be near one another, within the walls, but in the banlieu their concentration is imposed. They must be distinguished from other houses by the size of the figures of their number, which must be two feet in length. Their total number in January, 1854, was 144 within, and 68 without, the town, against corresponding numbers of 193 and 36 in 1842. The number of women registered to these houses in 1854, were 1009 and 493 respectively.

Among the regulations applicable to the *maîtresses*, or *dames de maison*, are the following :—

They must lodge no more inmates than they have distinct rooms.

They may keep no child above four years old upon the premises.

They must report, within twenty-four hours, every application made to them for lodgings, and every change of lodgers, as well as to keep accurate registers for the inspection of the police. Their windows must be kept constantly closed, and be either of ground glass or provided with blinds and curtains.

They may place no person at their door as a sign of their business, before seven or after eleven, P.M.

They must enforce upon the women under their authority the observance of the provisions of the *carte*.

They may not receive minors, or students in uniform ; and

They must report immediately all cases of disease, and generally keep record of all that passes in their houses, or transpires with regard to their inmates.

Those of the Banlieu must conduct their lodgers once in every week to the central sanitary office for examination ; must demand the permits of the military at night, and make return of all cases of excessive expenditure on their premises, or residence by strangers for more than twenty-four hours.

They may not send abroad more than one woman each at one time, the effect of which provision is that there being (for the sake of example) 204 houses and 1504 *femmes numérotées* on the register, the streets may be said to be permanently secured against the presence of 1298 individuals of the class.

The *dames de maison* are of course a vicious and, as a general rule, ferocious mercenary band, tyrannising over the unfortunate helots who form their stock-in-trade, and abjectly crouching before the inspector, the surgeon, and the mouchard. The possession of a house of this kind is, as marriage is in England, the highest aspiration of the prostitute. One of these sometimes succeeds in attaining to this pernicious eminence, but it is more frequently in the hands of families in whom houses and goodwill descend as heritable property. The recent editors of Parent's work instance that as much as 2400*l.* has been given for such an establishment, and 8*l.* has been offered as fine to avoid suspension for three days of one of the lowest. Large as these sums may seem, especially when reduced into francs, they will by no means surprise persons cognizant of the property amassed by those who minister, for ready money only, to the lower gratifications of even our more thrifty countrymen.

The houses appropriated in Paris to the temporary accommodation of prostitutes and their frequenters, termed *maisons de passe*, have been

always considered, and it would seem justly, more dangerous to public morality than the mere lodging-houses. They have been consequently the objects of much anxious vigilance by the authorities, who, nevertheless, proceeding on the principle that anything is preferable to uncontrolled clandestine prostitution, have taken them under their supervision as far as possible. Their numbers are, however, unknown. The only record given by Parent, and we may therefore safely assume the only one to be got, is, that in 1825 there were 150 of them recognised. To facilitate the operation of the police, each such establishment is compelled to bear on its books two registered women, and is therefore to all intents and purposes subject to the general dispositions with regard to the *maisons publiques*. The proprietors are subject to heavy penalties for receiving, *en passe*, girls under fifteen years of age, public women not known to them, or verified as such by production of the *carte*, or students of the public schools.

The *fille en carte* of Paris obtains, of course, what she can for her services, but the usual fee is from two to five francs. In the tolerated houses, the sum charged by the establishment varies from five to twenty, in addition to which the generosity of the visitor usually dictates a trifling present to the victim, *pour ses gants*, as it is called. At the Barriers, artisans pay by custom one franc, soldiers fifty centimes, for the hire of women by the hour. Excited to drink (for, as I have mentioned, the sale of liquor at the lowest class of houses is winked at by the police) by their visitors and the *dames de maison*, each from different motives, these *filles numérotées* of the Banlieu are from habitual intoxication so incapable of sanitary precautions or observance of decorum, that in their case, at least, the regulations of the *Bureau des Mœurs* may be esteemed rather a blessing than a curse.

Similar systems, more or less improved upon the Parisian type, prevail at Toulon, Lyons, Strasburg, Brest, and other large French garrison towns; but as they appear unlikely to furnish the reader with new ideas, I will spare myself and him any further reference to them, until I have to speak of foreign hospital arrangements.

SYNOPSIS OF BELGIAN REGULATIONS.

I am indebted to Dr. J. R. Marinus, Joint-Secretary of the Belgian Royal Academy of Medicine, for a view of prostitution in Brussels. That city owes to the exertions of M. Charles de Brouckère, her chief magistrate, and of her Commercial Council, a very stringent code of regulations, passed in virtue of their general power to make bye-laws, and based, to a great extent, upon the abortive suggestions for legislation prepared by the Hygienic Conference in 1832, the Academy of Medicine in 1842, and the Central Public Health Committee in 1838; and upon the experience of the Parisian system, which, as has been seen, is the growth of long study and practice.

All prostitutes are by these edicts divided into two classes—

1. *Filles de maisons-tolérées*, called *numérotées*.

2. *Filles éparses*, corresponding to the French *fille en carte*.

As the regulations as to admission, enrolment, radiation, tickets, houses,

&c., are so similar to those in force at Paris that their recital would be tedious, I shall content myself with giving statistics, and particularizing a few of the more characteristic features of the Belgian *régime*.

The fixed and floating population of Brussels and its suburbs in January, 1856, was 260,080, to which the garrison contributed 2414.

In the same year, the total registrations of prostitutes, according to the law in their respect provided, numbered 638, whereof 440 were renewals, and 198 fresh ones. But it appears that though the numbers of the *filles de maison* are not subject to variation, a great many of the *éparses* soon contrive to avoid further annoyance.

The numbers of the former returned as under *surveillance* in December of that year were—

In 4 licensed houses of the 1st class,	27	women.
In 25 " " 2nd "	123	"
In 13 " " 3rd "	47	"
Total	197	

which nearly corresponds with the total of previous years, while of the *éparses* only 90 were reported at the same date, against 186 in the year 1855—to which figure they had gradually dwindled from 232 in 1849.

The main difference between the Belgian and French systems appears to me to be, that the circulation of prostitutes in the streets after sundown is prohibited under the former; women under twenty-one may not be inscribed; and the medical visitation, *au speculum*, takes place twice a week by the divisional surgeons, and whenever else he may please by the superintending officer.

All the *éparses* and third-class *filles de maisons* are seen at the dispensary, and the first and second classes of the latter order at their domiciles. The *éparses* may secure this privilege by payment of an extra franc per visit.

The tariff of duties payable by houses and women is as follows:

Every 1st class <i>maison de passe</i>	pays	25	francs	per	month.
" 2nd " " "		15	" "		
" 3rd " " "		5	" "		

Every first-class *maison de debauché* pays 60 to 78 francs monthly, according to the number of its authorized occupants—from 6 to 10; and two francs extra for each such additional person.

Every such second-class house pays 20 to 32 francs for from 3 to 7 women, and one franc extra for each additional.

Every such third-class house pays 8 to 16 francs for from 2 to 7 women, and one franc extra for each additional.

Every 1st class <i>fille éparsée</i>	pays	on	each	inspection	40	centimes.
" 2nd " " "					30	"
" 3rd " " "					15	"

Upon punctuality for four successive visits these payments are returned; for inexactitude they are doubled.

The following correspondence has been established between the medical

men of the military hospitals and those of the police office, which is stated to have had an excellent effect upon the health of this garrison.

The hospital medical staff forward day by day to the surgery of the police minute and exact particulars of each military venereal patient taken into hospital, with his account of the place, house, and woman who he has reason to think infected him. She is soon brought up, and if upon examination she should prove to be diseased—yet neither on the police surgeon's list nor in hospital—she is speedily introduced to both, and restrained for a time from further operations against the public health.

Truth compels me to avow my opinion, that however much the virulence of syphilis may have abated, and the health of the Brussels garrison been improved within twenty years, there is no marked improvement in the general tone of morals there.

For the fact appears to be, that while the regulations of the central police are remarkably stringent upon a few hundred women who reside within the walls, their application in the suburban communes is at the discretion of the local magistracy. As, therefore, the screw of power is turned in Brussels, the unfortunates have withdrawn to Saint-Josse and other extramural spots, where every variety of vice is domiciled; or, coming from the town for the occasion, seek passing cover to an uncalculated extent.* The limited number of *soumises*, and the flying notice I have given of the complicated and minute details of the system, will be apt, I think, to encourage the idea that the whole affair is a somewhat tyrannical and useless plaything—for somebody's pleasure, I presume, and for somebody's profit also—but little enough conducive to morality for the public good.

SYNOPSIS OF THE HAMBURG REGULATIONS.

The flourishing city of Hamburg proper, with a fixed population of 180,000, and a large floating one, began as early as A.D. 1292 to provide in its municipal code for the toleration and control of fornication. The system at present in force was initiated by the town herself in 1807, improved upon under the French occupation in 1811, and finally settled in 1834. It is of great length, and minute, as might be expected, to the extreme; but though of great value as a check upon the most fruitful sources of venereal disease, is, like its doubles in other cited instances, a painfully weak experiment as regards public morality.

Registration, both of women and houses for their reception and use, is compulsory. Recruitment, by means of authorized procuresses, who make a few shillings per head on importations from country districts, is permitted by the police, who properly caution and examine, medically and otherwise, each female so brought to them, explaining the nature of the contract to which she proposes to become a party, and offering, to a certain extent, acceptable alternatives before the last rags of modesty are officially scattered to the winds, and the health-ticket finally delivered. The registered woman may accost persons of the male sex neither by day

* I have seen it stated while these sheets were passing through the press, that an attempt has recently been made to extend the police regulations more rigorously to the suburban *communes*: with what result remains to be seen.

or night—may show no light in her rooms, unless behind drawn curtains—nor receive men under twenty years of age—nor be in the street, unaccompanied, after 11 P.M., under penalties, both to herself and the landlord of the house she lives in, of from two to eight days imprisonment on bread and water diet. She is also strictly forbidden, when out of doors, by any speech or gesture to indicate her object. There are three grades of females; and the rates of duty levied upon the house-keeper in their respect are—

Upon the 1st class, 5·70 francs per month.

"	2nd	"	3·80	"	"
"	3rd	"	1·90	"	"

This is remitted to such as have children; but when unpaid, without this excuse, entails forfeiture of the concession by the lodging-house, and of the *livret* by the woman. The number of *inscrites* was 512 in 1846, of whom 334 were resident in 90 licensed domiciles, and 178 in their own apartments; and the last reports favour the idea that these numbers have not up to the present time fluctuated. The examination with the speculum, which takes place at home twice a week, is conducted by a staff of three medical officers and an inspector of police, who sign the bill of health or remit the individual to the hospital forthwith, as the case may be.

The revenue accruing (besides a trifling levy by the medical staff employed) is about 14,000 marcs banco per annum, of which 5000 marcs banco are apportioned to the General Hospital, where gratuitous treatment is, in virtue of these arrangements, afforded to prostitutes; 2000 marcs banco to the Bridewell, or House of Correction; and the rest to charitable institutions for penitents.

With the exception of the provision common to this town and Berlin, that the keeper of a licensed house must defray the cost of curing any person whose contraction of venereal disease in his house can be established, I think there are no other features peculiarly worth notice in the Hamburg *régime*, either with respect to the *maisons de passe* or the *maisons tolérées*. But I may not conclude this necessarily brief notice without offering, as additional material for thought, the statement, which I extract for what it is worth, from Dr. Lippert's communication to the last edition of Parent-Duchâtelet:

"Marriage seems to be on the decline in Hamburg much as in other more populous communities, for it is remarked that—

In	1709	there was	1 marriage	to 45 souls.
From	1826 to 1835	"	1	" 97 "
"	1840	"	1	" 100 "

And in 1825 and 1826, according to the registers of the latter year, accouchements three or four months after marriage took place in about one case in two."

Our countrymen who have visited Hamburg are no doubt familiar with the fine bold countenances of the females of the second class, who, flashily and not always inelegantly dressed, habitually pose themselves at their open windows, by twos and threes, talking loudly together, but without more than furtive recognition of, or allurement to, the passer-by

beyond this mere display. The interiors of the first-class establishments, whose inmates—mostly Bavarian and Pomeranian girls—are generally paraded for exhibition in a handsome apartment, are studiously arranged, both here and in Berlin, with a view to comfort and some propriety. The police make constant domiciliary inspections, and nascent disorder of any kind is suppressed at a moment's notice.

I should also add, that the waterside suburb of St. Paul, inhabited by the sailors and lower order of artisans, has a distinct police organization with reference to prostitution.

SYNOPSIS OF REGULATIONS IN BERLIN.

The regulation of the prostitution of Berlin, a city of 400,000 inhabitants, has long been the cause of contention between the severe puritanism of the religious public and the police administration of the place. It has been much argued by the former that, inasmuch as marriage was a desirable state, it could be fostered by uprooting the vices parasitical to celibacy, and crusades have, therefore, when this party has been in the ascendant, been carried on against prostitution in particular. The town has been repeatedly purged since the Reformation, but has as often immediately fallen a prey to desertion of infants, adultery, abortions, and clandestine prostitution. Hence the public recognition of that which they could neither suppress nor ignore with public advantage has been forced upon the authorities.

It appeared to a Commission of Inquiry, in 1717, when repression was in vogue, that clandestinity had attained such magnitude that the Bride-wells were inadequate for the reception of the arrested women. The tolerated houses which had been previously shut up were therefore again opened. The monthly contribution by prostitutes to a sick fund was instituted in 1791, and in 1795 the houses were classified. In 1796 a strong and successful attempt at suppression by the religious party induced the old result of increased disease and secret vice. After a return to toleration, the same thing again occurred in 1845, when the twenty-six licensed houses were closed, despite the remonstrances of the police department, and their 300 inhabitants banished, as well as all other females without ostensible means of support. But unnatural offences, self abuse, secret prostitution, and illegitimate births, became so common, and syphilis so much more than ever severe and frequent, that even General von Wrangel was induced to make a forcible appeal, on behalf of the army's health, against the *quasi* improved order of things. The number of females who entered the public hospital had risen from 627 and 761 to 835, and that of the males from 711 in the year 1845 to 979 in the year 1848.

In the year 1850, a Commission of Public Morals was founded to act with the police department in framing and enforcing regulations, and in 1853 a code was promulgated in the hope of assisting—

1. Public health, by checking contagious disease.
2. Public morality, by preventing seduction and the corruption of morals generally.
3. Public safety, by denying refuge in the haunts of prostitution to thieves and other dangerous characters.

Among its leading provisions are the following :—

All exercise of prostitution must be confined to licensed houses, or be esteemed clandestine and suspicious. A register of suspected females is to be kept, and they shall from time to time be cautioned. If detected, they must be visited weekly, and otherwise treated as common women. Formalities similar to those prevailing in France are gone through with regard to the ticket, admission, liberation, &c. The *inscrites* are examined with the speculum twice a week, and may not appear at any place of public amusement, nor indeed leave home unaccompanied by the lodging-house keeper or his authorized deputy. The engagement between these house-keepers and the authorities is stringent upon the former, who have to deposit caution-money and are subject to numerous fines. They must provide under-linen and certain medical appliances for the personal cleanliness of their lodgers, as well as for their surgical inspection; covenant for their good treatment, and pay a monthly sum towards a medical fund, in exchange for which the department contracts for the perfect cure of all disease. They may permit no visitors at their establishments after 1 p.m., and must at once report and keep separate any female even suspected of disease, or in default be liable to make good the pecuniary damage which may accrue to others through her contact. They may not detain for debt the person or necessary clothing of any woman who may wish to quit their roof, nor, under penalty, connive at her contraction of debts exceeding in the aggregate twenty thalers.

In a public document of 1849 the number of prostitutes of all classes in Berlin was estimated at 10,000. Dr. F. J. Behrend, whose work furnishes me with the preceding particulars, considers that the clandestine ones now reach 8000. He however furnishes no material for approximating the number of *soumises*. This is probably due to the well-known reserve of the Prussian police; but, considering the proved tendency of the numbers on these registers to be stationary, and the number returned in 1845, we shall, I apprehend, not be very far wrong in estimating them something short of 1000.

Dr. Holland states, with reference to a certain class of the tolerated houses in Berlin, "The entrance is 6*d.*, for which a cup of coffee is given. The use of a private room for fifteen minutes, 3*s.*; for thirty minutes, 5*s.*; for one hour, 9*s.*; and these prices include the company of one of the women for the time stated, who is permitted by the authorities to receive one-third for herself."

SYNOPSIS OF REGULATIONS IN VIENNA.

I extract the following interesting observations, bearing upon the prostitution of Vienna, from Mr. Wilde's work upon the institutions of Austria:—

"Public brothels are not tolerated by the police, and public women are sent into the houses of correction; this, however, is but the letter of the law, not the practice; for though it has been stated that, owing to the present condition of morality, such persons *are not required* in that country, yet the lowest calculation allows the number of public females in the capital to be 15,000. It is, however, much to be admired that the same disgusting exhibitions which are witnessed in the capitals of Great Britain are not permitted by the Austrian police; all persons considered

of an improper character, when found in the streets after a certain hour, being conducted to the police office, and if on examination found to be diseased, being at once sent into hospital. Public women are not licensed in Austria, but the police have the power of entering their dwellings, accompanied by one of the police physicians, and if they are diseased compelling them to go into hospital. Notwithstanding the apparent moral condition of the city after nightfall, which must at once strike a foreigner, I am much inclined to think that the public exhibition of vice is often a test of private morality; as instances pro and con I might adduce the cities of Rome and Vienna on the one hand, and Dublin on the other.”*

In the same work, if we turn to p. 212, we find, as if corroborative of the writer's opinion as to Austrian immorality, that in the city of Vienna almost one in every two children is illegitimate; this, he adds, is only surpassed by Munich, where it is recorded in 1838 the number of illegitimate exceeded the legitimate by 270, and yet in that goodly city public women as well as tobacco-smokers are not allowed to appear in the streets; or in other words, during the last seven years, ending 1837, the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate births have been as ten to twelve in Vienna.

Mr. Wilde goes on to observe, at p. 213, “It may be asked are there any political reasons for encouraging such a condition of morals, for by thus permitting, it encourages? Yes, the Austrian State, whose political web extends not only into the paths of literature and science, but sends its far-stretching fibres into every domestic circle in the land, has, I have been credibly informed, and I believe it to be true, an object in thus countenancing illegitimacy—it is that of checking over-population, as those who are informed upon the subject of population well know it has the power to do, by decreasing the number of births and increasing the infantile mortality.”

At pp. 209 and 210, he says—“Startling as it may appear, it (the law) has offered a *premium for illegitimacy*. Let us see how this is brought about: 1st, The laws, both civil and ecclesiastical, relating to marriages in Austria, are so strict that few of the lower orders are able to avail themselves of that rite; 2nd, A female, even of the better class, does not (at least to the same extent as in other countries) lose caste on becoming illegitimately with child; 3rd, In the seventh month of her pregnancy (and many of them are enabled to get in sooner) she applies to the Lying-in Hospital, states her poverty, and is asked two questions—Are you legitimately or illegitimately with child? If she answers the latter she is received *sans cérémonie*; she is given a suit of clothes provided by the State (an imperial livery) to wear, and her own are carefully preserved till the period of her departure. After delivery she has to nurse her own, and perhaps another child, and on her departure she gets a bonus of five shillings. During the first two months the child is committed to her own care; it is then sent into the country at the public expense, and if a male it is always a welcome visitor in the family of an Austrian peasant, for if it can be reared to eighteen years of age it is rendered up to the conscription instead of the eldest son of its adopted father.”

* Wilde, pp. 313, 14.

PROSTITUTION IN ITALY.

Rome.—In the holy capital of sunny, passionate Italy, prostitution is in no shape recognised by either Church or State, on the ground, I believe, that the Pontiff's secular and religious functions are one and indivisible; and that the admission, much more the toleration, by Christ's Vicar of unhallowed connexion is an utter impossibility. But even the traditional sanctity of the centre of Christendom, the presence of St. Peter's Chair, and the partial training to self-mortification, which might be supposed to combine with ardent faith and blind obedience to the Church in strengthening virtue, are insufficient to counterbalance the instincts of men and the influence of climate. The mere aspirations of the religious, and the example of the virtuous world, are in Rome, as elsewhere, very feeble against the common promptings of nature, especially when backed, as they are in Italy, by temperament, idleness, and beauty. In the Pontifical States, of all civilized communities—where, over and above other considerations, the fearfully rapid development of syphilis by the climate, and the disproportionate amount of female celibacy entailed by monastic institutions among the males, might be alleged as excuses for its extended toleration and regulation—prostitution is nominally prohibited. Its resorts are proscribed, and so continually hunted from point to point, in compliance with no written law, by arbitrary authority, that scarce a dozen houses can contrive to lurk within the limits of the Roman police jurisdiction, and then only through the bribed connivance of the lower officials.

But the reverse of this pleasing show of external propriety shows clandestine prostitution, with its inevitable concomitants, depravation of morals and wide diffusion of intense disease, has invaded domesticity itself.

We are informed by Dr. Jacquot, a physician of the French army of occupation—and with regard to the last and most deplorable of them there is abundance of prior corroborative testimony—that there prevail in Rome five shapes of clandestinity.

1. *Les Pierreuses*, whom he describes to be a horde of creatures grown formidable since the military occupation, and plying their trade by night, with troops of men, in the angles of walls, ruins, colonnades and porticoes. "When in charge of venereal soldiers in Rome," he says, "I have traced as many as five cases of syphilis to one night's operations of a woman of this description."

2 and 3. Prostitution-covert in accommodation houses, sometimes kept by procuresses, and frequented by women of all classes.

4. *Femmes galantes*, who are mistresses of both residents and visitors from generation to generation.

5. Prostitution in private life.

With reference to the second, third, and fourth categories, no remark is necessary; but the last source of supply requires, I think, some brief observations, beginning with a recital of Dr. Jacquot's impressions.

"As a consequence of this disastrous rule (viz., suppression), prostitution in Rome is more or less all-pervading. It is carried on, alas! too often in families, under the parental eye, almost as though it were an admissible calling. A mother will introduce you to her daughter; the

young girl, whose turn is yet to come, to her elder sister; and the little brother will light you up the stair—a degree of turpitude and degradation which, by the way, exists also at Naples, where prostitution is tolerated. If the customs of the Cicisbei have left the mansions of the rich and noble, where they were nurtured by idleness and immorality, necessity has imported acquiescence nearly as degrading into the less opulent houses of the middle rank.”

Ladies of this caste submit themselves occasionally to sheer prostitution by visiting the *maisons de passe*, or strangers who gain access to them through the intervention of procuresses. This demoralization is, I conceive, less traceable to vicious propensities than to impatience of restricted means—less to absolute penury than to the attrition of factitious wants engendered by the passion for display and luxury, which leads the smaller proprietors, the lackland nobility, and the underpaid official gentility of the south, into expenses totally unwarranted by their incomes. The carriage and pair is so imperious a necessity with the Roman lady, who can by no means brook the humble one-horse vehicle, that the Milanese have an old saying—“The Romans put their stomachs into harness;” and sometimes the observer of to-day might add, “their honour too.”

I have a holy horror of travellers’ facts; so I will leave to others the most easy labour of collecting a farrago of semi-incredible tales of Italian frailty, and conclude by saying, that the women who will thus set virtue at no higher price than wardrobe or equipage, are oftener than not excellent mothers, and (though many an English reader would here exclaim, *Credat Judæus*, &c.) truly affectionate wives—at least, so say men who pretend thoroughly to understand Italian society. In judging of prostitution, as of the other immoralities of one people, we shall do well not to gauge them inexorably by our own manners and customs. The ladies of ancient Rome bore, as protecting amulets, carved golden images that we should now consider emblems of indecency; and the pair of monster horns that deck the chamber of a married pair in modern Italy, as a charm against witchcraft, is a “word of fear distasteful to the wedded ear” among the nations of the north.

Among the lower orders—save, perhaps, among the Transteverini, where virtue is the rule—misery operates as elsewhere. So little work is there to be found in a country with neither manufactures nor agriculture—so potent is the love of the *far niente* among the modern Romans—that the poor man’s wife is too often welcome to his bed if she only bring the spoil of the travelling or the native *debauché* for which she has bartered her adulterous embraces. This deplorable state of morals, although it has not attained the colossal proportions attributed to it by hostile malice, is nevertheless no secret; and persons who have long withheld credence from it become in time convinced that there are grounds for believing in its existence.

But monstrous though it be, and deplorable—no less remarkable are the gigantic provisions made, in this poverty-stricken, police-ridden capital of 150,000 souls, for the poor and needy, and the sick and sorry. A community, not more extensive than some London parishes, lodges, feeds, and keeps entirely, more than 4000 aged and infirm persons, orphans, and foundlings, besides giving general out-door relief, and caring specially

for more than 1000 superannuated artisans. It maintains the surgical hospital of St. James, of 384 beds, of which a number are allotted to venereal patients; and those of the Good Shepherd and Santa Maria Trasteverina. Besides these foundations, there are the refuges of Santa Croce and Loretto for repentant females; a vast pilgrim hospital; and "homes" out of number for the houseless poor, and for destitute females. The objects of public Christian charity in Rome number in all somewhere about 22,000 annually, and the sums drawn from the Roman public for the noble work would astonish even the rich and openhanded municipality of Paris, still more so the sometimes shortsighted guardians of parochial purses in our own plethoric metropolis.

Naples.—The stews or *bordelle* of this capital are fully recognised, if not licensed, by the police, and undergo inspection at intervals by underpaid Government officials, who derive additions to their income from the contributions of the class whom it is their supposed duty to supervise. There are also in Naples great numbers of *quasi* clandestine prostitutes, chiefly Sicilians, who are supported through the activity of the *ruffiani*, or pimps, who operate in the frequented quarters of the town, and pester Englishmen especially with their offers of service. The low prostitution of the town, ministering for the most part to the desires of the military and marine, is gathered together in the suburb outside the Porta Capuana. Report says, there is a certain fixed tariff for the enjoyment of these women;* and the entrance to and exit from their quarter are under the charge of military posts, which, every other route being carefully blockaded, all visitors must pass. A drive through this "inferno" was, and perhaps is, one of the great sights for strangers at Naples. Its shameless denizens would expose themselves most fully to the curious in the open street. They were supposed to number some thousands, but I am afraid to say how many; and also have reason to think, although I repeat it with reserve, that residence in the quarter is imposed upon some of them as a punishment for private erotic delinquencies, attended by more than usually notorious scandal.

I am inclined to think this system of suburban prostitution may have obtained in the days of the dramatist Ford. In *Love's Sacrifice* (Act iv., Scene i.), D'Avolos is made to say:—"Your only course, I can advise you, is, to pass to Naples, and set up a house of casualty; there are many fair and frequent suburbs, and you need not fear the contagion of any pestilent disease, for the very worst is very proper to the place."

The English cemetery is close to the prostitutes' quarter, and until the latter was hemmed in, the chaplain, on the road to the scene of his labours, was obliged, unless he made a long *détour*, to pass through some of its streets.

HOMES AND HAUNTS OF PROSTITUTES IN LONDON.

I will now endeavour to supply the reader with a few of my impressions upon the unfettered domestic life and haunts of London prostitutes, which in default of better experience he can presently bring to bear with what information we may have as to the present state of our law,

* See barrier houses of Paris, page 83.

towards estimating the practicability of assimilating it to those which prevail abroad or otherwise improving it. For the sake of clearness I shall briefly notice under separate heads :—

1. Homes—viz., dress houses ; houses in which prostitutes lodge.
2. Haunts—viz., introducing houses ; accommodation houses ; casinos and pleasure gardens ; the public streets.

Dress Houses.—The description of brothels called dress houses was much more prevalent a few years ago than is the case at present. They are still, however, maintained to some extent by persons who furnish board, lodging, and clothes to a number of prostitutes whom they send out into the streets under guard of servants, or keep at home to receive visitors. The girls, who, it is needless to say, are of the most utterly degraded class, receive but a small share of the wages of their sin ; their condition is almost as abject as the *filles numérotées* of the Continent in general, and they are far more unprotected than those of Berlin, especially against those who speculate in them. But the spread of venereal taint is not, as might be imagined, more favoured by this most revolting shape of the evil than by any other. The brutalized woman-farmers have, it is true, no more bowels of compassion for the male sex than for their stock-in-trade, and will drive into the streets with taunts and curses the diseased unfortunate. But the evil reputation which an establishment might acquire by being a focus of disease, induces them to adopt a certain degree of care and precaution.

The sympathy and curiosity of a, fortunately sober, friend of mine were once awakened by the behaviour of a very handsome girl, who, seemingly against her will, was very urgently forced upon his notice by a brothel-keeper, who was hawking her about the streets. Acquiescing in the offer of her company and paying the demands of the house, he put some searching questions to the girl. She at first half confessed slight indisposition, but on his avowing himself a medical man, and showing clearly enough that his curiosity like his gift was dictated by mere charity, she submitted to a superficial examination. No more was required to prove that she was a mass of syphilis.

The rouged and whitewashed creatures, with painted lips and eyebrows, and false hair, who haunt Langham Place, portions of the New Road, the Quadrant, the Peristyle of the Haymarket Theatre, the City Road, and the purlieus of the Lyceum, are the most prominent gangs of this description in London. They are watched by persons of their sex, employed purposely to prevent their abstraction of the lodging-house finery, or their clandestine traffic with men. As their bodies and their time are no longer their own, they are restricted, for the convenience of the real proprietors, to certain parades or beats, and from year's end to year's end may be observed on the same side of one particular street, and within a few hundred yards or less of one particular spot. Should their solicitations be unsuccessful, their exertions are stimulated by the proprietor in person, who will sally forth from the den to aid the canvass, to admonish and to swear ; and sometimes by the sentinel in charge, who assumes for the time being these functions of authority.

There are probably seven or eight French houses of this description in London, and I have reason to believe that the lodgers of all but two of them are rarely seen plying in the public streets. They are principally

recruited by women imported from Paris, after being redeemed from the *maisons tolérées* of that capital by payment of the debts they have contracted. Each woman who under these conditions takes up a residence in England, is already shackled. She is clad by the keeper, who feeds her well, and allows her to enjoy herself in her own manner, perhaps one day a week, but under strict surveillance always, if on no other account, for the sake of the property upon her back. The natural question, "Why does not this woman escape from this white slavery?" is best answered by other queries—Whither can she fly? What can she do? She speaks no English, and owes money for which she might, and no doubt would, be rigorously persecuted. On the other hand, she has been thoroughly trained as a prostitute perhaps from tender years, and has never regarded herself in any other light than as a chattel; is found in fine clothes, is well fed, and allowed liquor, for which Frenchwomen here domiciled soon contract a fancy. When used up she will be dismissed to practise for herself, or, less from charity than to clear the market of her presence, sent back to France.

Since the above lines were written, I have received abundant corroboration of my impressions that this kind of establishment is far less numerous in Western London than heretofore. It will be remembered that before the invention of casinos, and while the only *lust garden* of London was Vauxhall, the leading theatres were the centres of prostitution and its allied and parasitic callings. The whole neighbourhood of Covent Garden and Drury Lane, which are now by no means pure, then reeked of it. The boxes and the saloons of the playhouses were the marts, and as the wholesale dealers kept the adjacent taverns and lodging-houses within a moderate radius, the business was as it were concentrated and under control. But when the distant and far apart casino and Cremorne drained the saloon and the gin-shop, it appears to me that the perfect supervision and economy of the special trade being no longer practicable, the majority of those who pursued it fell back upon congenerous but less pernicious industries. In the low quarters of the town, however (the city proper excepted, which, from its thin resident population and ample police, is remarkably free from all forms of domiciled prostitution), they are still numerous. It must be avowed, too, that persons whose opinions are entitled to respect, consider that, as in Paris,* so in London, and for the same reasons, this farming out of their persons is not attended with such unmixed evil, as regards their temporal interests, to the very dregs of this order, as might, *prima facie*, appear its necessary consequence. Soddened with liquor as they usually are, ever reckless, often frenzied, they would, without the constant supervision of some crafty and spirit proof old hag, be more uncontrollably dangerous to themselves and society than at present.

This inquiry must not be lost sight of by such as would philosophically consider the subject. The British *dame de maison* is no doubt almost "as black as she has been painted;" but is it not among possibilities that society might be the worse for her utter abolition? She is, of course, a tyrant, and an odious flesh contractor; but taking into view the peculiar depravity and frightfully callous ignorance of those most aban-

* See Women of the Banlieu, p. 83.

dened of all abandoned, who voluntarily seek her tutelage (for nearly all the tales of inveiglement, rape, and involuntary detention in these places are romance), I confess the inquiry suggests itself to me, where (unless in a prison) but under such a tyranny, could these castaways find harbour—where find food?

And here, again, I feel bound to protest against the extraordinary inventions indiscreet fervour has contributed as facts to the public stock of information upon the prostitutes' haunts and calling. Exaggerated narratives of robbery and violence in brothels, based it is true on rare and scattered facts, but ventilated without fear of contradiction, because the defendants have no *locus standi*, and multiplied as stories always are by telling, are so seriously received by a number of the public and some zealous authors as general truths, not singular exceptions, that calm deliberate handling of the subject is almost scouted even by educated men. I find, for instance, translated from the French, in a recent publication, the following passage:—"From a medical friend he learned, that near what is called the Fleet Ditch, almost every house is a low and infamous brothel. There is an *aqueduct* of large dimensions, into which murdered bodies are precipitated by bullies, and discharged at a considerable distance into the Thames, without the slightest chance of discovery."

I traced the windings through English and French authors of this anecdote, until I found it first in print in the work of an English professional gentleman, dated 1839. Who was the medical friend who imposed upon *his* authority, must remain, as far as I am concerned, a secret; but the anonymous compiler of to-day who represents the ancestry of this and other fictions, culled, I believe, from "Jack Sheppard," "Oliver Twist," and the comedies of the Restoration, is put forward to the world as (alas, for science) "a physician."*

Houses in which Prostitutes Lodge.—I must now briefly notice the domiciliary arrangements of the various classes of independent prostitutes. These are so influenced, like our own homes, by the resources and taste of the individual—have so little local colour—and are besides so exceedingly well understood among men, that accurate pictures at any length would be as superfluous as fancy sketches would be out of place.

* It is singular that Dr. Richelot, who quotes in his treatise, without further impugning it than as *un peu trop optimiste*, my opinion, "that the majority of our prostitutes return sooner or later to a more regular course of life," should a few pages off express himself in the following terms:—"Seulement dans la prostitution, jamais on ne s'élève; toujours on tombe de plus en plus bas, et toutes les classes tendent, par un avilissement progressif, à se fondre en une seule, celle qui est placée au dernier échelon. C'est surtout à Londres, que cette dégradation rapide est manifeste. Par l'influence combinée de la dureté des entremetteurs, de l'inclemence du ciel et de l'âge tendre des prostituées, ces dernières s'y usent et s'y flétrissent avec une promptitude effrayante." I need hardly say I differ from my *confrère, toto celo*, unless (and I would give him the benefit of the doubt, and suggest this also to persons who may read elsewhere translated extracts from French works) he puts a far narrower construction upon *prostituée* than we in England apply to *prostitute*. It would almost seem as if he intended to convey by it only the very dregs of the class; for after quoting one or two passages from Talbot and Ryan, applicable to such only, he says, "Le petit nombre de faits que je viens de rassembler pourrait suffire, à la rigueur, pour donner une idée assez exacte de la vie que les prostituées de Londres, ont à supporter en général." I have no hesitation in saying, though for this I cannot blame Dr. Richelot, that the few facts in question could give no general ideas whatever about London prostitution.

If we enter the house or decent apartment, in a suburban neighbourhood—where, perhaps, the occupier of the shop below is non-resident—of the first-class common prostitute, we find it neat or slovenly, plain or elegant, according to its mistress's income, the manners and taste of her singular or plural admirers, and her tendency to sobriety or the reverse. We have cheap and respectable lodgings, in reputable quarters of the town, wherein young and pleasing women of unambitious temperament will reside for years, receiving no visitors at home, anxiously guarding their characters there, and from choice involving themselves in no more sin than will serve to eke out their modest earnings, or provide a slender maintenance, which they may have been precluded from earning in their normal walk of life by the first false step. This numerous band, who, keenly alive to their painful position, willing to do better, unwilling—even for the sake of those wondrous magnets, dress and admiration—to join the ranks of the flashy and dissipated, are the proper objects for reformatory institutions. London holds hundreds of them, not too far gone for true, permanent reform; and success would richly reward a far larger expenditure than can be expected at the hands of private charity.

A great number of lodging-houses crowded together, in certain neighbourhoods of no fair fame, and called generically, in police reports, "notorious brothels," devote themselves especially to the reception of prostitutes. They are clean or dirty—comparatively well or ill furnished, according to the capital embarked in them. From the highly-rented houses near Portland Place and the cheap (because new) ones in inaccessible Pimlico, to the atrocious slums of Blackfriars and Whitechapel, there are, of course, many steps, and with the rent at which the proprietors offer their apartments varies, of course, the style of the sub-tenants. In point of morality, there is, of course, no difference; and in the general internal propriety, little enough. The most decently-minded woman who takes up her quarters in a circle of prostitutes, and, though she has a private apartment to receive company, betakes herself for society and distraction, as do always the inmates of such houses, to the common kitchen, must speedily fall to the common level. She finds that modesty and propriety are considered offensive hypocrisy. Liquor, in the intervals of business, is insisted upon by her companions and the landlady, who makes a profit on the supply. Her company is sought for novelty's sake when she is a new comer, and her absence or reserve is considered insulting when she is fairly settled; so, if she had any previous idea of keeping herself to herself, it is very soon dissipated. She finds, when she has no male visitors, a sort of communism established in her rooms, which she can only avoid by resorting to the common hall in the dirty kitchen. There is no making head against this practice in lodging-houses generally, and hence the remarkable uniformity in the habits, manners, dress, and demeanour of the three or four sub-sections of their inhabitants.

They are usually during the day, unless called upon by their followers, or employed in dressing, to be found, dishevelled, dirty, slipshod and dressing-gowned, in this kitchen, where the mistress keeps her *table-d'hôte*. Stupid from beer, or fractious from gin, they swear and chatter brainless stuff all day, about men and millinery, their own schemes and adventures,

and the faults of others of the sisterhood. As a heap of rubbish will ferment, so surely will a number of unvirtuous women deteriorate, whatever their antecedents or good qualities previous to their being herded under the semi-tyranny of a lodging-house-keeper of this kind. In such a household, all the projections of decency, modesty, propriety, and conscience must, to preserve harmony and republican equality, be planed down, and the woman hammered out, not by the practice of her profession or the company of men, but by association with her own sex and class, to the dead level of harlotry.

From such houses issue the greater number of the dressy females with whom we are familiar as the frequenters of the Haymarket and the night-houses. Here they seem to rally, the last thing, from other parts of the town, when general society, and the most decent as well as lowest classes of prostitutes, are alike housed for the night. Here they throw the last allures of fascination to the prowler and the drunkard—hence wander to their lairs, disgusted and weary if alone—noisy and highspirited if chance has lent them company.

The keepers of these lodging-houses are mostly females of extreme avarice, and often ferocious manners—the former sharpened by the unprincipled atmosphere in which they live, and the latter by the necessity of preserving discipline among their tenants and dependents. They are ordinarily persons who have been bred to the business from youth, as relatives or old servants of their predecessors. Such an establishment is too lucrative to permit the idea of its dispersion upon the death or retirement of a proprietor; and the fact is, that the lease, goodwill, and stock-in-trade of a brothel are, in such an event, disposed of like those of any other lodging-house. Women who have been themselves kept or frequented by men of property are sometimes able to found or purchase one or more of them. A large share of their tenants' earnings passes through their hands, and a liberal portion always remains there. They are highly paid for liquors and eatables they may procure on account of male visitors; and several instances are well authenticated of their having left ample means behind them, or having retired wealthy into private life.

HAUNTS OF PROSTITUTES.

Introducing Houses.—The establishments of certain procuresses (Latin, *proxenetæ*; French, *proxénète*: brokers, go-betweens, match-makers), vulgarly called “introducing houses,” which resemble, to some extent, the *maisons à parties* kept for a similar purpose by somewhat used-up *lorettes* of the first water in Paris, are worth notice as the leading centres of prostitution here. Unobtrusive, and dependent upon great exterior decency for a good connexion, they concern us as little from a sanitary as from a police point of view, but are not without an influence upon the morals of the highest society. Their existence depends upon the co-operation and discretion of various subordinate accomplices, and on the patronage of some of the many wealthy, indolent, sensual men of London, who will pay any premium for assurance against social discredit and sanitary damage. Disease is thus rarely traceable to such a source, and notoriety and scandal nearly as seldom; although impolitic economy on the gentleman's part, or indiscreet bearing towards any of the cha-

racters among whom he cannot be a hero, will induce them occasionally to hunt him and his follies into daylight, as a warning to others, not against the lusts of the flesh, but against sentiments which horse-leeches might consider illiberal. He usually obtains for his money security, comfort, and a superior class of prostitute, who is, according to his knowledge of the world or desires, presented to him as maid, wife, or widow—British, or imported direct from foreign parts. The female obtains fairly liberal terms, either directly from the paramour, or from the *entrepreneuse* (who, of course, takes good care of herself); the company of gentlemen, and when this is an object with her, unquestionable privacy. A number of the first-class prostitutes have relations with these houses, and are sent for as occasion and demand may arise. I have heard of one establishment at which no female is welcome who has not some particular accomplishment, as music, singing, dancing, or languages, to a more than common extent.

A stranger might be long in London—as he might, indeed, in Paris, where the *dame à parties* is a more prevalent institution—without hearing of, and still longer without gaining access to, this aristocracy of brothels. Their frequenters are often elderly, sometimes married, and generally men of exclusive sets, upon whom it would not be to the proprietor's interest to impose even unseen association with the stranger or the *roturier*. The leading persons in this line of business, who keep up regular relations with certain men of fashion, and sometimes means, make known to their clients their novel and attractive wares, one might almost say, by circular. A. finds a note at his club, telling him that a charming arrival, *de la plus grande fraîcheur*,* is on view at Madame de L.'s. If he has no vacancy for a connexion, he may answer that a mutual friend, C., a very proper man, will call on such and such a day in — road, or that Madame — may drive the object round to his rooms at such another time; but that he has no great fancy at present for anything but a thoroughly warranted—in fact, an all-but modest person. All parties handle the affair with mock refinement. Sometimes, money passes direct, as third persons have to be arranged with; at others, the broker, or procuress, ventures her capital, and leaves recompence to the honour of her friends—some of whom, of course, fleece her, others do what is considered fair, and now and then may be so generous that she is, on the whole, perhaps, better off than if she traded on strict cash principles only. The pungent anecdotes which occur to me respecting such houses and their frequenters, would, if properly disguised, go little way in proof of their existence—which, by the way, must be patent enough to those who habitually read law reports—and as their unvarnished recital here would give my pages an air of levity quite foreign to my intentions, I must suppress them, and request the reader to take for granted, for the purposes of this survey, the existence of these superior haunts of London prostitution.

Accommodation Houses.—Accommodation houses for casual use only, the *maisons de passe* of London, wherein permanent lodgers are not received, are diffused throughout the capital; neither its wealth nor poverty exempting a district from their presence. I have not, and I believe that no other person has, any guide to their numbers or classification. I

* Sic in orig.

have seen various numerical estimates of these and other houses in print, some of them professing to be from public sources ; but I attach in this respect little value to even those I have obtained from the police, as their framers seem neither to have settled for themselves or for the public the precise meanings of terms they employ. In the restricted sense in which I have employed the words "accommodation house," I fancy their number is limited. Few persons I have spoken to are aware of more than fifteen or twenty within two or three large parishes, and as they almost invariably name the same, I am strengthened in my opinion that these lupanaria are few. It were more desirable, indeed, that they should multiply than either class of the brothel proper above described ; or that clandestine prostitution should be largely carried on in houses devoted to legitimate trades, and inhabited presumed by modest females. The thorough elasticity of prostitution is shown in this as well as other ways ; that there being a demand for more numerous and dispersed places of transient accommodation than at present exists, within the last few years numerous coffee-houses and legitimate taverns, at which in former days no casual lodgers would have been admitted, without scrutiny, now, I understand, give accommodation of the kind, for the part openly, or when not exactly so, on exhibition of a slight apology for travelling baggage.

The few accommodation houses of London are generally thronged with custom, and their proprietors are of the same order, and perhaps make even more money, than those of the lodging-houses. Their tariffs and accommodation range between luxury and the squalor of those ambiguous dens, half-brothel and half lodging-house, whose inhabitants pay their twopences nightly. I believe that disorder is rarely encountered or courted by any casual frequenters of such places, and that in all of them but the vilest of the vile, the proprietors would be for their own sakes the last to countenance it, and the first to call in the aid of the law.

Dancing Rooms and Pleasure Gardens : Laurent's Casino.—I confess, after a sufficiently painstaking survey of these resorts, to some difficulty in confining to the pursuit of serious speculations the pen that is almost irresistibly drawn towards description and touches of character. I am, however, discreet enough to perceive that the eye of a professional man is but faintly adapted to catch the lights and shades on the Rialtos of prostitution, and that the task of sketching them should devolve upon the moralist, not the surgeon. Any such attempt of mine would be absurd, has probably been anticipated by more competent hands, and would moreover be most stale and flat to my readers. For many of these will be better versed, and the rest, I expect, will not be less so, than I am in the places of entertainment in question.

In the course of some researches after concentrated prostitution, I was induced obviously enough to pay a visit to M. Laurent's pretended "dancing academy," whereat to dance is rather *mauvais genre*, eschewed alike by the real gibus and toothpick school, who wander there to kill the dreary time between claret and lansquenet ; their feeble imitators of the middle classes, and the well-gloved Circes to whom perfect absence from the Argyll would be more tolerable than not to rattle up in hired brougham or well-appointed cab. The most striking thing to me about the place was an upper gallery, fringed with this sort of com-

pany. A sprinkling of each class seemed to be there by assignation, and with no idea of seeking acquaintances. A number of both sexes, again, were evidently visitors for distraction's sake alone; the rest were to all intents and purposes in quest of intrigues.

The utter indifference of the stylish loungers in these shambles contrasted painfully with the anxious countenances of the many unnoticed women whom the improved manners of the time by no means permit to make advances. I noticed some very sad eyes, that gave the lie to laughing lips, as they wandered round in search of some familiar face,—in hope of friendly greeting. There was the sly triumph of here and there a vixenish hoyden with her leash of patrons about her, and the same envy, hatred, and malice of the neglected "has been," that some have thought they saw in every day society. The glory of the ascendant harlot was no plainer than the discomfiture of her sister out of luck, whom want of elbow-room and excitement threw back upon her vacant self. The affectation of reserve and gentility that pervaded the pens of that upper region, seemed to me but to lay more bare the skeleton; and I thought, as I circulated among the promiscuous herd of groundlings, that the sixpenny balcony would better serve to point a moral than the somewhat more natural and, at all events, far more hilarious throng about me. As far as regarded public order, it seemed an admirable arrangement—to the proprietor of the rooms, profitable—of most of its cribbed and cabined occupants a voluntary martyrdom—in all of them, as making more plain their folly and misfortunes, a mistake.

The great mass of the general company were on that occasion males—young, middle aged, and old, married and single, of every shade of rank and respectability—and of these again, the majority seemed to have no other aim than to kill an hour or two in philosophizing, staring at one another and the women about them, and listening to good music, without a thought of dancing or intention of ultimate dissipation. When I consider the floating population, to whom it were absurd to preach intellectual pastime, whose alternatives after their day's pursuits are the inelegant dinner-reeking coffee-rooms of London inns, where unwholesome brandy and water is the inevitable penalty upon peace and quietness, a visit to some place of amusement, or positive street walking, I cannot wonder at the flocks of passenger birds who resort to the overcrowded music rooms at Evans' (where also grog prevails), and thence, I think, overflow into the casinos. Add to these the men in chambers, sick when night comes of their dull apologies for homes; then the unnumbered waifs and strays of every mercantile and professional calling, with minds left fallow by indifferent education; then those of genuinely dissipated inclinations, and you will come, I think, at last to wonder as I do, that no more than two or three of these well-ventilated lounges are open and well filled. Among them, or I should say, among us, was of course an abundance of prostitutes of every degree, short of the balcony aristocracy,—flaring and retiring, handsome and repulsive, well dressed and tawdry. A few had come with companions of our sex to dance, and many had paid their shillings on speculation only. Some pretty grisettes had been brought by their lovers to be seen and to see, and once or twice I thought I saw "a sun-beam that had lost its way," where a modest young girl was being

paraded by a foolish swain, or indoctrinated into the charms of town by a designing scamp. There were plenty of dancers, and the casual polka was often enough, by mutual consent, the beginning and end of the acquaintance. There was little appearance of refreshment or solicitation, and none whatever of ill-behaviour or drunkenness. It was clear that two rills of population had met in Windmill Street: one, idle and vicious by profession or inclination, the other, idle for a few hours on compulsion. Between them there was little amalgamation. A few dozen couples of the former, had there been no casino, would have concocted their amours in the thoroughfares; the crowd who formed the other seemed to seek the place with no definite views beyond light, music, and shelter. Many whose thorough British gravity was proof against more than all the meretriciousness of the assembly would, I fancy, have been there had it been confined to males only. I am convinced they were open to neither flirtation nor temptation, and I know enough of my countrymen's general taste to affirm that they ran little hazard of the latter.

That a great improvement has taken place in the manners and appearance of these women, no one will deny, who recollects past generations of their quality. This is due to the substitution, in a great measure, of dancing and music for the sedentary drinking of former days. The graceful and, indeed, unnaturally slight forms now prevalent, contrast no more strongly with the Rubenesque development which was the horror of former days, than the decorum of the Argyll Rooms with the traditional intoxication and bruising of our fathers' time. We are not, it is true, an easily contented people, and it is perhaps well so; but when I call to mind what was formerly seen in the fashionable resorts of prostitution, the theatrical saloons to wit, whose novelty and splendour indeed hardly served to veil their obscenity from the neophyte; and how in the *status quo ante* polka the upper boxes of the now charming Haymarket Theatre were blockaded against ladies by ladies of easy virtue, I cannot refrain from so far regarding casinos with satisfaction. The columns of the press used to teem with diatribes against both saloons and upper boxes, but though Mr. Manager this, and Mr. Lessee that, promised and vowed "vigilance," "amendment," "a new leaf," "most fastidious taste," "shock the eye and ear of refinement," "directions given to the attendants," "keep out all improper characters," and so on without end; still, while the dissolute had money and to spare, and manager and lessee were not always in that position, the scarlet fluttered in saloon and boxes. Paterfamilias has the great and simple invention of M. Cellarius to thank for his ability to take his wife and daughters to the play, or send them there with beaux or brothers, without anxious misgivings. He takes advantage of this, but I believe he is not half thankful, for he still now and then rides his old hobby into the new lists, and forgetful of how things have changed, runs a tilt against the present haunts of prostitution. He rails and preaches against vice when he ought, as I view it, to thank her for spontaneously doing what he could obtain of her neither by persuasion nor by force, I mean putting herself in a corner. He surely cannot want the casinos too. This Æolian Cave of contrary winds is for ever helping to distract the judgment of the public and of public men, and to defer any arrangement of the many questions involved.

Casino de Venise (Holborn Casino).—Having seen little else at M. Laurent's balls but worn-out lackadaisical women and bored men, I was astonished at the huge surplus of vitality which distinguishes the *habitués* of this dancing-room. I say *habitués*, because my companions and myself remarked that the place was, as it were, in the hands of an extensive clique. In this respect it somewhat brought to my mind the *Bal du Prado* of the Quartier-Latin, the select Almack's of the students and *étudiants* of that ever-to-be-remembered locality, where strangers to the quarter and its customs, if admitted without a voucher, soon feel in a false position. I would not be at all interpreted as casting a slur upon either the management or the society of the Holborn balls. On the contrary, if I have any bias, I must own it is towards a favourable consideration of such easements of the streets, presenting as they do in their athletic amusements and prevalent sobriety a remarkable contrast to the grosser haunts of prostitution formerly in fashion, and intolerable to young men of still recent times, whose taste and judgment could hardly be said to have broken the shell.

Here were few loungers and no exquisites. The brilliant ball-room, glittering with a myriad prisms, which might do duty with young minds for a hall of diamonds in a fairy palace, was given over to a troop of dancing dervishes. The frenzy of these fanatics was stimulated not by poisonous champagne or spirits, but by the act itself of dancing, glasses of bitter beer, and bottles of soda-water. The young men, when they changed the dance from the levelling polka to the more criticizable quadrille, betrayed themselves to be generally clerks, apprentices, and young shopkeepers of position. There was also a sprinkling of law and, I dare say, medical students, and a stray midshipman or two were obviously bent upon consuming some large stocks of preserved energy.

I was pleased to note the radiant health and spirits of nearly all present. I could not, though I would willingly have so done, persuade myself that I was not in an assembly of whom a third at least were prostitutes, but I saw here, with no small satisfaction, a full corroboration of my impression that brutal manners and scandalous behaviour are no necessary integer of the prostitute's character, and that when she is treated like a civilized being, and not *du haut en bas* by men, she can be as orderly and natural as the virtuous of her sex. There were evidently present on the evening in question—and from inquiries made at the time, I fancy this is the ordinary complexion of the society—a considerable number of the grisette class of girls, the equals in point of all but means of their dancing partners, and, putting honour for a moment on one side, of those partners' sisters. I could not but regret that the silly aspirations of society had conspired with sad chance first to hinder these youths from early and consistent marriage with girls adapted to them, and then to throw those very girls at their feet as mistresses and harlots. All, however, whom I saw—grisette or common prostitute—were cleanly, well-dressed, and well-ordered. The old master of the ceremonies, whose face I well recollect among the *corps de ballet* of the Opera, ruled the assembly with a smile, and the constable in the lobby was the only one of all the visitors and officials who seemed thoroughly out of employment. I presume that an

occasional drunken man or jealous woman must find their way to this as to other mixed assemblies, and as such complaints are catching, the customary scenes must occur, and the proper punishment of disorder must ensue. My own favourable impressions of the place were not disturbed by any such occurrence, and when I left it, I could not avoid the reflection that this one at least among modern resorts of vice, if not less dangerous to morality than its filthy predecessors, the Tom-and-Jerry shop and the Drury-lane stew previously alluded to, had the advantage over them in refinement and public decency, and in being far less injurious to the health of the visitors.

The Garden at Cremorne.—It might seem rather late in the day to argue, on the grounds of its entertaining prostitutes among others, against the most beautiful public garden London can boast for the amusement of her people, and which, like many others of its kind, has taken, despite of strong objections, a position among the *faits accomplis* of the age. The union of Terpsichore and Melpomene, long forbidden by puritanism, is now, I am glad to say, sanctioned by the magistracy; large capital has been invested in providing local habitations for the young couple, and these are frequented without risk of more than nominal damage by great crowds of both sexes, all ranks, and all ages. No less than fifteen thousand people were lately present at Cremorne, on the occasion of the manager's benefit, and the nightly visitors during the fine season amount to between 1500 and 2000. As my present business, however, is with the demeanour of London prostitution, I must unwillingly limit myself to the consideration of public out-door amusements, with reference to that common feature only, and state some impressions of travel on a July evening in 1857, from Charing-cross to Chelsea. As calico and merry respectability tailed off eastward by penny steamers, the setting sun brought westward Hansoms freighted with demure immorality in silk and fine linen. By about ten o'clock, age and innocence, of whom there had been much in the place that day, had seemingly all retired, weary with a long and paid bill of amusements, leaving the massive elms, the grass-plots, and the geranium-beds, the kiosks, temples, "monster platforms," and "crystal circle" of Cremorne to flicker in the thousand gas-lights there for the gratification of the dancing public only. On and around that platform waltzed, strolled, and fed some thousand souls—perhaps seven hundred of them men of the upper and middle class, the remainder prostitutes more or less *prononcées*. I suppose that a hundred couples (partly old acquaintances, partly improvised) were engaged in dancing and other amusements, and the rest of the society, myself included, circulated listlessly about the garden, and enjoyed in a grim kind of way the "selection" from some favourite opera and the cool night-breeze from the river.

The extent of disillusion he has purchased in this world come forcibly home to the middle-aged man who in such a scene attempts to fathom former faith and ancient joys, and perhaps even vainly to fancy he might by some possibility begin again. I saw scores, nay hundreds, about me in the same position as myself. We were there—and some of us, I feel sure, hardly knew why—but being there, and it being obviously impossible to enjoy the place after the manner of youth, it was necessary, I suppose, to chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancies; and then so little

pleasure came, that the Britannic solidity waxed solider than ever even in a garden full of music and dancing, and so an almost mute procession, not of joyous revellers, but thoughtful, careworn men and women, paced round and round the platform as on a horizontal treadmill. There was now and then a bare recognition between passers by—they seemed to touch and go, like ants in the hurry of business. I do not imagine for a moment they could have been aware that a self-appointed inspector was among them, but had they known it never so well, the intercourse of the sexes could hardly have been more reserved—as a general rule, be it always understood. For my part, I was occupied, when the first chill of change was shaken off, in quest of noise, disorder, debauchery, and bad manners. Hopeless task! The pic-nic at Burnham Beeches, that showed no more life and merriment than Cremorne on the night and time above-mentioned, would be a failure indeed, unless the company were antiquarians or undertakers. A jolly burst of laughter now and then came bounding through the crowd that fringed the dancing-floor and roved about the adjacent sheds in search of company; but that gone by, you heard very plainly the sigh of the poplar, the surging gossip of the tulip-tree, and the splash of the little embowered fountain that served two plaster children for an endless shower-bath. The *gratus puellæ risus* was put in a corner with a vengeance, under a colder shade than that of chastity itself, and the function of the very band appeared to be to drown not noise, but stillness.

The younger portion of the company formed the dances, and enjoyed themselves after the manner of youth, but I may fairly say, without offence to the most fastidious eye or ear. The *Sergent de Ville*, so necessary—if the semblance of propriety is to be preserved at all—to repress the effervescent indecorum of the *bal Mabille* at Paris, would have been here an offensive superfluity. The officiating member of the executive, Policeman V, had taken up an amiably discreet position, where his presence could in no way appear symptomatic of pressure, and the chances seemed to be, that had he stood so posed until his interference was necessary on behalf of public order, he might have been there to this day.

Lemonade and sherry seemed to please the dancers, and the loungers indulged the waiters' importunity with a rare order for bitter-beer. A strongish party of undergraduates in drinking—all males—were deepening their native dulness in a corner with bottled stout, and more seasoned vessels struggled against depression with hot grog. In front of the liquor-bar, called, in the language of the billographer, "the gastronomic department," two rosy capitalists (their wives at Brighton or elsewhere) were pouring, for mere distraction's sake, libations of fictitious Mœt, to the memory of auld lang syne with some fat old *dames de maison*, possibly extinct planets of the Georgian era. There was no drunkenness here to take hold of. As I have before recorded, there was among the general company barely vivacity, much less boisterous disorder. Let me try the assembly for immodest, brazen-faced solicitation by women. I declare my belief that I never saw the notoriously anti-sociable habit of Englishpeople more rigorously adhered to. Of the character of the female visitors—let me always say *with some exceptions*—I could have little moral doubt, but it was clear enough that self-proclamation by any great number of them was out of the question. It was open to the male

visitors to invite attention and solicit acquaintance. No gentlemanly proposition of the kind would have been rebuffed, no courteous offer of refreshment, possibly, declined, but I am firmly of opinion, that had the most eligible men present tarried in hopes of overtures from the other side, they might have been there yet, with Policeman V.

As to the costumes of the company I have little to say, beyond that pretty and quiet dressing was almost universal, and painted cheeks a rarity; but one or two physical characteristics seem worth mentioning. I saw many an etiolated eye and blanched chlorotic complexion, due to want of sun and air, and general defibrinization, but not more noticeable here than in Mayfair. There was here and there a deplorable hectic flush, distinguishable enough from carmine; and I noticed a great prevalence of sunken eyes, drawn features, and thin lips, resulting from that absorption of the cellular tissue which leaves mere threads of muscle stretched upon the skull. Inasmuch as within my recollection women of the town had a well-known tendency to stoutness, and they now live no worse than heretofore, I am inclined to attribute these symptoms not so much (as is the vulgar error) to the practice of prostitution, as to the dancing mania, which has been the only remarkable change of late years in their mode of life, superadded in many instances to the action of early privations, and perhaps hard work in domestic service and millinery factories, upon naturally delicate or defective organizations.

The Streets of London are, as I have said before, an open book, and he who walks in them can read and think for himself. I have now to approach the difficult topic of REGULATION.

PRESENT STATE OF THE LAW.

The Police Act.—It becomes me now to inquire what is the actual state of the law with regard to prostitution—that is, what pressure it is in the power of the authorities to exercise upon it, and how far that power is exerted.

The horn-book of the metropolitan constable, his articles of war, the Alpha and Omega of his arguments, is the Act of Parliament of the 2nd and 3rd of Victoria, cap. 47, dated 17th August, 1839, and intituled “An Act for further Improving the Police in and near the Metropolis;” being an amendment of Sir Robert Peel’s original Statute, the 10th George IV.

I have before me a copy of the 2nd and 3rd of Victoria, and on examination I find the clauses bearing upon prostitution to be the 44th, 52nd, 54th, 58th, and 63rd.

The 44th clause runs as follows:

“And whereas it is expedient that the provisions made by law for preventing disorderly conduct in the houses of licensed victuallers be extended to other houses of public resort; be it enacted, that every person who shall have or keep any house, shop, room, or place of public resort within the Metropolitan Police District, wherein provisions, liquors, or refreshments if any kind shall be sold or consumed (whether the same shall be kept or retailed therein, or procured elsewhere), and who shall wilfully or knowingly permit drunkenness or other disorderly conduct in such house, shop, room, or place, or knowingly suffer any unlawful games or any gaming whatsoever therein, or knowingly suffer

or permit *prostitutes*, or persons of notoriously bad character, to meet together and remain therein, shall for every such offence be liable to a penalty of not more than five pounds."

It would appear that no more right of entry or power of action is given to the police by this clause, or any other in the Act before me, than they enjoy under the Licensed Victuallers' Act, the 9th of George IV. cap. 61, the governing statute in this case, by which they can only enter houses in case of disorder on request of the landlord, and can only proceed against him by summons or sworn information of one or more witnesses.

The 52nd clause of the same statute provides:

"That it shall be lawful for the Commissioners of Police from time to time, and as occasion may require, to make regulation for the route to be observed by all carts, carriages, horses, and persons, and for preventing obstructions of the streets and thoroughfares within the Metropolitan Police District, in all times of public processions, public rejoicings, or illuminations; and also to give directions to the constables for keeping order, and for preventing any obstruction of the thoroughfares in the immediate neighbourhood of her Majesty's palaces and the public offices, the High Court of Parliament, the courts of law and equity, the police courts, the theatres, and other places of public resort, and in any case when the streets or thoroughfares may be thronged, or may be liable to be obstructed."

The 54th clause provides, in continuation:

"That every person who, after being made acquainted with the regulations or directions which the Commissioners of Police shall have made for regulating the route of horses, carts, carriages, and persons during the time of Divine Service, and for preventing obstructions during public processions, and on other occasions hereinbefore specified, shall wilfully disregard, or not conform himself thereto, shall be liable to a penalty of not more than forty shillings. And it shall be lawful for any constable belonging to the Metropolitan Police Force to take into custody, *without warrant*, any person who shall commit any such offence within view of any such constable."

The same 54th clause also provides:

"That every common prostitute or night-walker, loitering, or being in any thoroughfare or public place, for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation, to the annoyance of the inhabitants or passengers, shall be liable to a penalty of not more than forty shillings, and to be dealt with in the same manner."

And again, that "every person who shall use any profane, indecent, or obscene language, to the annoyance of the inhabitants or passengers;" and also "every person who shall use any threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour, with intent to provoke a breach of the peace, or whereby a breach of the peace may be occasioned," may be also so dealt with.

The 58th clause enacts:

"That every person who shall be found drunk in any street or public thoroughfare within the said district, and who while drunk shall be guilty of any riotous or indecent behaviour, and also every person who shall be guilty of any violent or indecent behaviour in any police station-

house, shall be liable to a penalty of not more than forty shillings for every such offence, or may be committed, if the magistrate by whom he shall be convicted shall think fit, instead of inflicting upon him any pecuniary fine, to the house of correction for any time not more than seven days.

The 63rd clause enacts:

"That it shall be lawful for any constable belonging to the Metropolitan Police District, and for all persons whom he shall call to his assistance, to take into custody, without a warrant, any person who, within view of any such constable, shall offend in any manner against this act, and whose name and residence shall be unknown to such constable, and cannot be ascertained by such constable."

Disorder—Solicitation.—The police then are empowered, under the above-recited 58th clause, to deal with disorder, drunkenness, disorderly conduct, brawling, loitering, and obstruction, whether coming by prostitutes or others. Habitual loitering upon certain fixed spots they already keep in check, generally speaking without tyranny; and next comes to be considered what can be done in case of what is called "solicitation," or importunity, a prominent feature in the general bill of indictment against prostitution.

I quite agree with Sir George Grey, whose opinion I shall presently quote, that great evil might happen were the power of arrest on suspicion to be left in the hands of the police, or were unsupported charges of improper solicitation considered enough to justify their intervention. This would at once give the power, and thousands would avail themselves of it, to every unprincipled villain to bring discredit upon any woman he had a spite against; and the discretion as to receiving charges could not then be safely entrusted to the ordinary and not over-paid policeman. Those who recollect the public sensation when, a twelvemonth ago, an honest young person was injuriously, though on apparently fair grounds, taken into custody, at the instance of a shopkeeper, on a charge of passing false money, will readily estimate the anxiety which, were such arrests possible, would attend the walks, whether on business or for pleasure, of all unprotected women. The period of such an experiment would be a reign of terror, and on the first case of imposition on the police, mistaken identity, or abuse of power, either of which might occur within the first week, the enactment would explode amidst public execration.

I have already said that solicitation by English prostitutes is confined to females of a low grade. As far as my experience goes, and that of most men whose opinions I have asked, the annoyance in question is of the most trifling and transient description. I have noticed particularly that those who practise it are, as it were, confined to one beaten track, and never follow a man across the street. Again, it may so easily be ended by total silence, that the efficacious *ultima ratio* of an appeal to the police is rarely needed by the *sober* pedestrian; and society can hardly be expected to step out of its way for the protection of the reeling drunkard, whose own folly issues an invitation to all the predatory classes.

It is not clear that even Parliament may lawfully pretend to deny to any person, however vile, the absolute freedom of civilly addressing any other; but supposing it desirable to act strongly against solicitation,

under the sanction of this 54th clause, we should find, I believe, that the necessary burden of proving, first prostitution, and then annoyance, wherewith we are obliged to fence public liberty, will render all regulations comparatively inoperative. It would be inexpedient, for the reason I have before stated (although it is now legal), that charges of solicitation should be taken freely, without the evidence of at least one person of character, totally independent of both the police officer and the actual or supposed complainant. This necessary evidence would, I fancy, be very rarely forthcoming; and even supposing it dispensed with, we should always find that the precise person to whom the importunity of the woman would be insupportable overnight, would be infinitely more troubled by having to devote the following morning to appearance as complainant or witness against her at a police office.

St. James's Parishioners.—In no part of our metropolis does prostitution so rankly flourish as in its richest and most populous western quarter. A recent deputation to the Home Secretary, Sir George Grey, from St. James's, Westminster, after touching upon the increase of infamous houses, and the inefficacy of legal proceedings taken by the authorities of that parish, for their suppression, entered the following protest against the aspect of Regent-street:

"In close connexion with, and a consequence of the numerous existing brothels, to the extent and evils of which your memorialists trust they have sufficiently adverted to command your attention, is the assemblage of large numbers of prostitutes (chiefly foreigners) and their male followers in the principal streets, who not only loiter on, but actually block up the footpaths from an early hour in the afternoon, making the passage of decent females unattended, without insult, very hazardous, and even when attended, rendering it almost impossible for them to escape from disgusting language or indecent conduct. That your memorialists possess no control whatever over persons misconducting themselves in the public streets, but believe such offences to be punishable under the Act 2nd and 3rd Vict., cap. 47, intituled 'An Act for further Improving the Police in and near the Metropolis,' which renders liable to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings, 'every common prostitute, or night-walker, loitering, or being in any thoroughfare or public place for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation, to the annoyance of the inhabitants or passengers.'"

Allowing, as will the majority of disinterested readers well acquainted with our streets, for a good deal of suggestive exaggeration in the above memorial, I must still own there is too much of truth at the bottom of it. Of this any man may convince himself who will take a few turns any fine afternoon along the lower half of Regent street. His ear will be met by a confusion of vulgar, shameless female tongues, and his eye with the most ridiculous vagaries of design in millinery. He will congratulate himself that the Babel is not caused by the English sisterhood, to whom it is perhaps more offensive for many reasons than to other citizens, but to a party of foreign women from every climate under heaven, who seem to make up on British ground for the long restraint their tongues and persons have been subjected to in the countries of their birth.

Turning to the Police Act, we find that the inhabitants themselves

seem to have ample power under the statute to put an end to the nuisance they complain of. We follow them to the seat of justice, and we find a stop put to their proceedings by an enlightened administrator of the law, in the name of public liberty and equal justice for all.

Proceedings at Marlborough-street.—The following decision of Mr. Hardwick, stipendiary magistrate at Marlborough-street,* in the case of a crowd of these women arrested for loitering in Regent-street, is still fresh in public recollection, and abundantly illustrates the difficulty which besets the application of the present law. "Five prostitutes (the majority foreigners) were charged by the police with walking up and down Regent-street in the open day, for an immoral purpose. Police-constable Simons said, "In consequence of the complaints of the inhabitants of the nuisance and obstruction to business occasioned by the shameless conduct of women of loose character (principally foreigners), who congregated in Regent-circus and the adjacent streets, the defendants had been taken into custody, and charged with parading up and down the public street for the purpose of prostitution." Several of the inhabitants of Regent-street, who were in court, came forward to sustain the proceedings of the police. They said that the lower part of Regent-street in particular was infested all day long by throngs of French and Belgian prostitutes, whose immodest and audacious behaviour had a serious effect on the business of the street, and was particularly detrimental to tradesmen who wished to let apartments. They trusted that the magistrate would assist them in their efforts to abate this intolerable nuisance.

Mr. HARDWICK "was disposed to give all reasonable assistance in such a case, but it was only on clear and broad grounds that he would act. No doubt it was a violation of public decency that at all hours of the day this exhibition on the part of prostitutes should be going on, in one of the most public streets in the metropolis. In no other capital in Europe would this be tolerated, and if he wished to put down the nuisance here, the question must first be raised as to whether this class of women should be allowed in the street at all. It would not do to deal with a few only; they must all be dealt with, whether in Regent-street, Pall-mall, or Oxford-street, who were walking about avowedly for the purposes of prostitution. If the existing law were put into force, all such women were liable to a penalty of forty shillings, but it would not do to bring up a few for judgment—the law must be enforced against all. He should recommend the inhabitants to draw up a request to the Police Commissioners on the subject, and then no doubt the police would receive further instructions. As the defendants were only charged with walking about publicly, he should now discharge them."

Proceedings at Guildhall.—The subjoined report of a conversation in the Municipal Council of this city will serve to show the opinions there evoked on the first blush of a coercive proposition. The national love of liberty, anterior to law and logic, dictated the absolute dismissal, by persons of undoubted character, of a petition, compliance with which might have involved its infringement, and would rule conformably the

* "The Globe," Dec. 28th, 1855.

decision of any deliberative assembly, from that of St. Stephen's to a beershop, before which the matter might come.

Alderman WILSON presented a petition from the inhabitants of the Ward of Castle Baynard, complaining that the neighbourhood of St. Paul's-churchyard was greatly disturbed by the conduct of women of the town at night, and praying that the Court would take some means to abate so serious a nuisance. He had, upon the representation of the circumstances to him, advised the petitioners to apply to the Commissioner of City Police, who, however, informed them that the magistrates would not assist his efforts to remove the women of the town from the place described as being subject to the nuisance.

Alderman FAREBROTHER said, if the commissioner or his men could not establish a case against the unfortunate women whom they might think proper to take into custody, why should not the magistrate dismiss them? (Hear, hear.) These poor creatures must be somewhere; in Regent-street they were infinitely more numerous than they were in St. Paul's-churchyard; and why, if acts of disorder were not proved against them, should they be punished with imprisonment or with the bad treatment of being brought before magistrates at all? He for one would not imprison a wretched woman merely because she was brought before him by a policeman.

Sir P. LAURIE had often discharged unfortunate women against what appeared to be the reasoning of the police—that if a woman after having walked down Fleet-street dared to walk back again, she must be walked off to prison. (Hear, hear.)

The Recorder read the section of the City Police Act, to show that it was not exactly according to the statute to take into custody and imprison unfortunate women who walked the streets without committing any offence.

The petition was then rejected.*

Parish of St. James's Deputation to the Home Secretary.—The law is certainly strong enough to effect much that the most anxious advocates of repression would demand. But the obstacles in the way of its enforcement—even supposing it conceded that notoriety of characters was *ipso facto* "public disorder"—seem to be many. There is the difficulty of applying equal pressure over such a large extent of ground, and to such a numerous body as even the known prostitutes, and the inequity of arbitrary selection—then the inconvenience to "inhabitants" and "passengers" of pleading "annoyance" within the meaning of the act—then the possibility of error—and, lastly, the reluctance of magistrates to entertain charges on the mere unsupported allegation of a constable.

The street features of London prostitution, which are painful to ourselves, are disgusting to all foreigners of refinement, who, of course, contrast its attitude here with that in their respective capitals. They naturally, of course, inquire why an orderly commonwealth like ours neglects to remedy, by an imitation of their systems, the evil all are agreed in condemning? Thus stimulated, and irritated, beyond a doubt, by the constant presence among them of foreign prostitutes, whom they justly imagined would be numbered and ticketed in their own countries, a

* "The Times," Feb. 21st, 1844.

deputation of our fellow-citizens very naturally suggested to Sir George Grey the adoption of the foreign restrictive policy. They received the following answer :—

“As to the reference which had been made to the absence in France and Belgium of annoyances in the public streets, it should be remembered that that freedom was purchased at the expense of a direct legislative sanction of prostitution. He (Sir George Grey) questioned whether it would be right, on the ground of public morality or good principle, for him to suggest any similar course to the legislature of this country, and he felt certain that the public generally would not sanction any such course. If they did not sanction what foreign countries did, they must continue to submit to annoyances such as those complained of.

“With respect to what had been said about prostitutes in the streets, and the power which existed under the Police Act of dealing with them, the law required that some act should be done to prove that the person was really a prostitute. It would never do to place in the hands of the police the power to take up any woman whom they pleased to suppose to be a person of improper character. In their anxiety to suppress a great evil they must take care not to give such instructions to the police as might, when carried out, prove injurious and annoying to persons of good character.”

It appears to me, supposing the above report to be accurate, that the Home Secretary would have found far better shelter under the political than the religious difficulty. The direct legislative sanction, of which he made an imposing feature, is the weak spot of his argument. Had he said that freedom from annoyance was purchased abroad at the expense of liberty, he would have been in the right ; but he could not have established, without difficulty, that it was either impolitic or irreligious to recognise all callings whose pursuit may bring individuals within the action of public police. This applies no less to prostitution than to all branches of professional crime and vice. Nothing would be more natural and certain than our derision of the Minister who informed us that whatever degree of freedom from burglary we enjoy, was so enjoyed at the expense of an immoral sanction of the crime by Parliament !

Prostitution was kept out of view in the Licensed Victuallers' Act, and the original Police Act, but was introduced and specially recognised in that of Victoria, but is still far short of being under direct legislative sanction. Messrs. Hardy and Headlam would be surprised to hear the imputation that in their Bill, recently thrown out for its curiously monopolizing and tyrannical tendencies, they had been conspiring to place prostitution under the favour of the law or the protection of Parliament.

I think the feelings of the religious world would not have been outraged, while the efforts of social reformers must have been encouraged, had the speech of the right honourable Baronet contained a passage in the following sense :

“As to the reference which had been made to the absence in France and Belgium of annoyances in the public streets, it should be remembered that this freedom was, in the first place, after all incomplete. The public nuisance of solicitation still existed to a certain, though modified, extent in the capitals of those countries ; and what he presumed would

ever be in virtuous eyes the greater evil—namely, the actual presence of vicious women, and their mixture with the virtuous—was, if anything, more patent to observant persons in those cities than in London. The subjection, again, of personal liberty to police action, for which a degree of exemption was purchased, was carried on, it was true, by sufferance, but was barely justified by either French or Belgian law; and being enforced, not against all prostitutes indiscriminately, but against such only as could not command means to evade it, would be characterized in this country by the odious title of ‘one law for the rich and another for the poor.’

“Prostitution, although some persons would be surprised to hear it, was already to a limited extent recognised by English law, and to exert farther pressure upon it would demand a far more complete recognition, which might be distasteful to many. Great power was by our present law reposed in respectable householders and passengers in the streets, but the exercise of this power appeared to present such inconveniences that these parties now requested of him, not, it would appear, to strengthen their hands, but to act for them. He questioned whether members of the deputation would not be among the first to censure any attempt on the part of his department to issue and enforce repressive edicts without the consent of Parliament, and also whether Parliament itself could be induced to pass enactments which might with show of reason be termed very anti-liberal.”

I should have then taken no objection, had Sir George Grey somewhat oracularly concluded as follows:—“He must beg to be understood as not declining to entertain the subject, because he was of opinion that something might yet be done. If the existing law should, on consideration, appear insufficient, or its operation constitutionally inconvenient, he was not without hopes of being able to devise measures which should tend towards the very proper aim of the parishioners, without throwing undue power into the hands of the police, or affording plausible ground for religious discontent, by appearing to lend to vice the sanction and protection of the State. But the deputation must fully perceive that it was a delicate matter to find a way through all the difficulties he had mentioned.”

Regulation of Regent Street.—I am, as will have been seen, no advocate of rough measures; but it does not seem to follow as a matter of course that what cannot be cured must be endured without mitigation. Although morals, law, and liberty are at a dead lock, all expedients are not exhausted. The vigilant police of the C division have already, since the date of the above deputation, so materially abated the Regent-street nuisance, that after several inspections I am warranted in stating the amount of disorder and solicitation in that thoroughfare to be nominal. I am informed that a year or two back every passing shower afforded a pretext to the foreign women of the Regent-street division for extravagantly raising their dresses; but—so much will a judicious police effect—this practice has been abandoned without more than passive remonstrance. As concentration, termed I believe by the French police *raccrochage*, still to some extent prevails in Regent-street, and very largely in the Haymarket, where, as Superintendent Lister says—and I fancy he is within the mark—as many as three hundred loose women might be

counted at one time on the *trottoir* and within their different houses of call: I venture to propose at least one unpretending scheme, suited to the real wants of public order in each of those thoroughfares particularly, and in other situations in London similarly haunted by prostitutes.

The main object of the St. James's deputation was, I apprehend, the suppression of the public exposure, *upon a very limited area*, of noisy, soliciting, gesticulating prostitutes. So far I think the public would sanction severity. It occurs, as I have before remarked, in only three or four spots in town, at least during hours when shops are open and decent people supposed to be abroad, and mainly becomes a nuisance by intercepting the promenades of ladies, and consequently injuring trade and depreciating the value of property. In Regent-street it arises almost entirely by the foreign importations, who, not content with advertising their craft upon their backs, proclaim it *à la haute voix*. From English women of any grade frequenting that locality, except the lowest and the tipsy, few persons can pretend to experience any annoyance, even at night. It is considered bad taste among the class to be noisy, obtrusive, or to address men without prior encouragement. Such as the nuisance is, however, I fancy the following plan would go some way towards its abatement, without prejudice to the morality or liberty of the citizen. It would be preposterous, of course, to deny perfect freedom of the streets to the prostitute; but equal liberty might be conceded, at least for a time, to the authorities, and the employment in the following manner, by either the police department or the parishioners, of a special prostitution constabulary, would in my opinion put such a pressure upon the pockets of the woman farmer (or in the absence of that intermediary, of the women themselves) as would compel both to alter their system of business.

If a service of constables, numerous, and not secret, but flagrant in their uniforms, were allotted to follow industriously the *troupe* complained of up and down the short portion of the street they now so much frequent, notice being given that this measure would be continued until they extended their radius from 200 yards to two miles, I am convinced they would be shortly starved into a capitulation, because no customer at all likely to be profitable would accost them under such a *surveillance*. Resist they dare not, for they know the state of public opinion in their regard, and the local interests would then reap a certain advantage at the common cost, by diffusing an evil whose concentration at their own doors they now suffer vicariously for the public.

It was suggested by Superintendent Hannant, when I drew his attention to some such expedient, that an additional force of constables would be required to carry it out, and that the ratepayers would probably object to the burden of their maintenance; but to this I can only rejoice that, if the parties aggrieved render the provision of the 54th clause inoperative by their own supineness or good-natured reluctance, and, although generally wealthy, people have not sufficient public spirit to contribute to one another's relief, by raising funds which, on their own showing, would advance their pecuniary interests, then neither their moral suffering nor financial damage can be so extensive as has been alleged.

Regulation of Portland-place.—I have doubted whether the following

important document should be recited here, as bearing upon mere "street regulation," or considered of in some other part of the present treatise as an attempt at "general moralization." But, inasmuch as the wholesale prosecution of occupiers, suggested by one of the speakers, must probably, when set up in newspaper type, have struck even its most zealous advocates as somewhat visionary—as the author of the memorial was not personally cognizant of the continual disorders to which he referred—and as the painful annoyance of respectable inhabitants of Portland-place by the crowd of street-walkers who infest that locality must be fully admitted on all hands, I have judged its insertion in this place convenient:—

"On Saturday, at the meeting of the Representative Council of St. Marylebone, held at the Court-house, Mr. Jonathan Soden, churchwarden, in the chair, a subject was brought under the notice of the vestry which not only involves most seriously the conduct of the police, but will in all probability lead to some steps being taken on the part of the Government with reference to one of the greatest and increasing evils with which the metropolis abounds. The following communication, read by Mr. Greenwell, the vestry clerk, from Mr. Roundell Palmer, Q.C., M.P., will explain the matter:—

"To the Gentlemen of the Vestry of St. Marylebone.

"6, Portland-place, August 1, 1857.

"Gentlemen,—I have been requested by a private meeting of several influential inhabitants of this neighbourhood, which assembled at my house on Wednesday evening last, and which was attended (among others) by the rectors of All Souls and Trinity districts, to solicit your most serious attention to a very great and increasing nuisance which infests our neighbourhood, and which we humbly conceive to be of vital consequence to an important part of the parish which the law has placed under your management.

"The evil to which I refer is the multiplication of houses of ill-fame in the streets on the east-side of Portland-place, especially Norton and Upper Norton-streets, the gross outrages upon decency and morality, and other disorders, which are reported to us as continually occurring in these places, and the consequently nightly resort of crowds of prostitutes to Portland-place, to the great offence, scandal, and disgust of the residents and their families and friends when going to and from their homes.

"It would be difficult to exaggerate the seriousness of these evils, or the extent of the distress and annoyance which they cause to the respectable part of the population; or their tendency to introduce crime, disorder, and demoralization into the neighbourhood, and to increase the rates and to depreciate the property therein.

"Believing that the remedy is in no slight degree in your hands, I have the honour to remain, gentlemen, your very obedient humble servant,

"ROUNDSELL PALMER."

"The Rev. Mr. GARNIER, Rector of Trinity, who attended with Mr. E. Hickman, one of the churchwardens of that district, moved the following resolution:—

"That the letter of Mr. Roundell Palmer be referred to the solicitor

of this vestry, with instructions to him to institute immediate proceedings against the occupiers of the houses complained of upon such sufficient evidence as he may now possess, or may be able to procure against them.'

"The state of the district around Portland-place was so painfully disgraceful, that upon the lowest computation, made after due investigation by himself, curates, readers, and others, no less than from 130 to 140 places were the resort of the unfortunate class of women alluded to, more especially in Cirencester-place and Norton-street. On a calculation, from 900 to 1000 women of the most abandoned character lived in that part of this most respectable parish, and which was one in twelve of the population, and one in six of the poor population of the district. This state of things he considered was most alarming.

"The Rev. Mr. WILMOT, Rector of All Souls, seconded the resolution, and complained of the scenes of debauchery presented along Portland-place.

"The Rev. Mr. GARNIER said one wealthy gentleman who had been compelled to give up his mansion was a supporter of all their local charities, schools, and benevolent institutions, and the clergy and the poor, as well as the parish, would deeply feel his loss.

"Mr. HUTCHONS did not see what that vestry could do in this matter. Norton-street, Charlotte-street, and the neighbourhood had possessed the same character for thirty or forty years. ('Hear, hear,' and 'No, no.')

It was a most difficult question to deal with. The Colonnade of the Regent's-quadrant had been taken down some few years since, one of the main objects being to prevent the congregation of those unfortunate women, but he believed it had not resulted in effecting that object to any great extent.

"After some further discussion, Mr. TAVENER said he had no objection to the resolution passing, if one, two, or more specific cases could be made out, but he did not think it at all wise that they should give Mr. Randall, the parish solicitor, the power of proceeding against 140 houses at once.

"Mr. FREETH said the only way to put down this crying evil was to make sure of one particular house, and then pursue the case to the utmost. Vice was generating in every part of the metropolis, and this ought to be made a governmental and not a local question. It was no use applying to the police, for it was well known they would not do their duty, as they were wallowing in the same filth.

"The Rev. Mr. EYRE, the new Rector for Marylebone, said although but newly resident in the parish, his attention had been directed to the lamentable state of things which existed in the particular districts referred to. His opinion was, that if they could not destroy an evil it would be better to disperse it. He was disposed to support the resolution.

"The Rev. Mr. GARNIER said that Mr. TAVENER had offered a suggestion which he had no objection whatever to add to and incorporate with his resolution. It was to the effect that the Commissioners of Police be applied to, and be requested to co-operate with the vestry in endeavouring to put an end to these glaring evils. (Hear, hear).

"The resolution as amended was carried unanimously."*

* "The Times," Aug. 3rd, 1857.

I shall, in a future page, consider how the domicile of the prostitute may be regulated, but will here look upon the Portland-place memorial as a petition for regulation of the *Pavé*.

It must be recollected, that the devotion of the district to infamous purposes is coeval with, if it was not anterior to, the driving of the magnificent air-shaft from the metropolis into the Regent's Park. The first occupants of those mansions found bad neighbours in possession of the district, and as evil as well as good must reside somewhere until its extinction, I cannot see that its summary eviction, *en bloc*, from any particular haunt, is consistent with public policy. Granting the right of vice to a local habitation, it would be a wrong that the elevated and armed, because instructed, propriety of Portland-place should be permitted to transfer the adjacent slums to some quarter yet unpolluted or more susceptible of pollution. I am so apprehensive that all the evils of a sporadic pest would attend such a dispersion of residences as was spoken of by the Rector of Marylebone, that I am far more inclined, if a real move is to be made, to advocate the concentration enforced at Naples and Hamburg. But against disorder in the homes of prostitutes, and against their congregating in the streets, all virtuous people, rich and poor, gentle and simple, are alike entitled to a remedy.

Interference with the ingress and egress to and from the domicile of persons who have not forfeited civil rights, is, I think I may say as yet unconstitutional and beyond the power (though I say this with deference to the distinguished advocate and Christian who has moved in the matter) of the Marylebone Representative Council. But it appears to me that the dispersion of those who now ply in Portland-place, and yet by continual movement contrive to evade the penalties of loitering, is a legitimate object, and that, pending farther legislation, the simple expedient suggested at page 113, with reference to Lower Regent-street, might be immediately adopted. It is not quite clear on the face of the report, that by the incorporation of Mr. Taverner's suggestion with the Rector of Trinity's motion, the precipitate plunge of the district into law will be suspended; but the meeting at all events exercised a sound discretion in requesting the co-operation of the Police Commissioners, who, not being the aggrieved parties, will doubtless take a more deliberative view of the question. The action of a body of discreet constables in the manner I have suggested, would effect the desired object as far as street regulation goes, and the difficulty as to the sinews of war could not be here interposed with justice. The respectable inhabitants of the ward are numerous, wealthy, and considerate enough for their neighbours to acquiesce in a special district police rate in that behoof, and were even this an erroneous impression of mine, I should apprehend no difficulty in raising among the householders of Portland-place, an adequate guarantee for the extra unauthorized expenditure incurred by the police department.

Protection of Honest Women.—But *à propos* of solicitation, importunity, and the like, let me invite all those who urge inexpedient and impossible restrictions upon prostitution, in the name of outraged female modesty and public decency, to a labour more easy and more worthy of their energies. I invite them, in the names of our wives, sisters, and daughters, and of all virtuous Englishwomen, whom men habitually

insult and terrify by confounding them with the harlots, to agitate for summary dealings against improper solicitation by males. It is a crying evil of our streets, and I apprehend should be a greater shock to real modesty than the mere sight of prostitutes, that any attractive woman, whatever be her station, who, whether for pleasure or on business, may walk unattended in London, is subject to indelicate, and often indecent overtures. I cannot farther digress into consideration of this topic, which I merely submit as a knot worth untying by such as have time and zeal.

Proposed Regulation of the Haymarket.—This thoroughfare, so celebrated and so justly complained of, is, I need hardly say, no daylight resort of prostitutes, but their nightly rendezvous. Until an advanced hour of the evening, the most fastidious could, I think, observe nothing about its passengers whereon to ground a charge of impurity; but its proximity to the Haymarket Theatre and the Opera House renders it a grave nuisance to frequenters of those amusements. I have been pained to see homeward-bound ladies and gentlemen, who should have known better, purposely threading the intricate maze of loose women on the western side of the street, while the more unfrequented opposite path, and that by Waterloo-place were perfectly open to them; but the want of space for carriages at the colonnade, and the reluctance of the public to wait the "turn" of their conveyances, render it needful, on many occasions, that the access to "the rank" should be disencumbered of the mass of bad characters with whom innocent women leaving the Opera are often entangled. There is much twaddle talked and written about annoyances that are really never experienced, and cures that are unreasonable; but here is a real grievance, and the remedy seems to me, who am no lawyer, within reach of a short arm. Here the public might justly call upon the Police Commissioners to put the above-cited 52nd clause and its rider into operation, and when they had done so, one of the most painful and salient features of London prostitution would have been removed. In the Haymarket are two well-attended theatres, at the nightly close of which throngs of orderly company—and among them many young, virtuous, and corruptible persons—are desirous of leaving the vicinity. But the prostitutes and their followers are in possession. The corruptible are wedged in with corruption; and youth and virtue are with difficulty extricated from the *mêlée*. This is manifestly an "obstruction" coming by prostitution, and is "in the immediate neighbourhood of theatres." No clearer case for police interference could be made out; but though the Commissioners are, on these occasions, absolute upon the Haymarket carriage-way, and maintain their authority there with all proper firmness, they are paradoxically inactive upon the footpath. As I can see no reason for this, I take leave to propose, as an amendment, that for the one half-hour only at the time of closing these theatres, the obstruction of the latter should be prevented, by its previous and complete clearance. It should be treated, during that short period only as an appendage to and a sallyport from the theatres. After five minutes' grace allowed for pedestrians *in transitu*, its vicious *habitués* should be swept into their local haunts or out of the neighbourhood, by an adequate picket of police armed with Clause 53, and allowed the same discretion as to admitting inhabitants and persons having ostensible business on the spot as they now exercise in case of

thoroughfares blockaded by fires, processions, or on other legitimate crowds. This temporary diversion of ordinary traffic is no greater stretch of authority than I have observed when rapid progress has been desired for two or three of the Royal carriages. Those in whose behalf I move my amendment include thousands of my fair and virtuous fellow-subjects—their fathers, brothers, and cavaliers. I think I may count upon the support of all who have ever felt the pain and embarrassment of escorting—or, as it often happens, driving—a convoy of ladies shoulder to shoulder, pell-mell, through a crowd of Cyprians and “lewd fellows of the baser sort who keep them company.” Traviata-ism for ladies may be well enough across the footlights, but a plunge into a hot bath of it on leaving her Majesty’s Theatre is a greater penalty than I would impose upon the most ardent admirer of that very popular “opera without music.” Some growling, upon false premises, might be expected from a few politicians, who believe that the greatest pleasure and business, as well as the inherent right, of cats is to look at kings, and would, I dare say, in the first instance, attribute such a regulation to aristocratic exclusiveness. But the respectable masses, who, great as may be their passion for imitation, wisely care but little for pure gaping at their betters, would so slightly feel this midnight deprivation, that any attempt to get up an excitement among *them* would be fruitless. Some discontent would, of course, be evinced by the classes directly affected. But the sense and sentiment of even the aiders and abettors of prostitution—of such, at least, as were blessed with modest female relatives—would ensure the success of the scheme. If, however, the executive—and against this blunder they must be warned—should unfortunately be led, by stress of puritanism, or a sneaking kindness for tyranny, to use the compromise against the liberty of the subject, all support would, I hope and trust, fail them, and my proposed amendment, becoming a public raw, be rejected with every indignity.

Conscientious men, who are used to do nothing without considering the end, can do no more to help society against the Haymarket. Perhaps this opinion ought to be explained. Much of the immoral presence observable in the neighbourhood is, as all men know, due to the numerous refreshment-houses and coffee-shops to which persons of both sexes resort after their evening’s amusement in the adjacent dancing-rooms and elsewhere. The street itself has become a common rendezvous of harlots and their frequenters, and every house on the western side seems more or less dependent on the class.

I have such a deep conviction that, for purposes both of morality and police, it were better if the entire vice of a large town could be covered by a hat, instead of being distributed by conduits, like gas and water, that I incline to favour resorts like your casinos, your Cremornes, and your Haymarkets. I have always heard that the crafty police managers of foreign States plume themselves not a little if they can collect members of any gang, conspiracy, society, club, or fraternity under their hand. *Divide et impera* is no motto of theirs, but a mousetrap or *souricière* is the emblem they affect. Hence, though I conceive some of the moral provisions of Mr. Hardy’s proposed bill might be advantageously brought to bear upon the haunts of prostitution, I am far from coinciding with some enthusiasts of my acquaintance, who pro-

claimed that a fine *coup-d'état* was about to be worked, and "Gehenna fair," as one of them poetically termed it, be abolished. I rejoice exceedingly that the volcano of prostitution, which now burns so briskly in St. James's parish until three P.M., is not compelled to vomit a stream of lava upon every quiet quarter of the town two hours before midnight—I think things are far better as they are.

Mr. Hardy's 19th clause attempted to lend new and increased force to the 44th section of the 2nd and 3rd Victoria (see p. 105), which has fallen into partial desuetude from its over strength. The introduction of this Bill may have been due, as was alleged by some of the honourable gentleman's opponents, more to a *tendresse* for the beer interest than a passion to restrain the immoralities of oyster-shops and coffee-houses; but, be that as it may, it would have placed in the power of somebody, to force every keeper of any such place of refectory or entertainment in London to refuse dealings with persons of bad character, under pain of loss of licence. It could only have been stronger had there been a smart penalty upon the policeman for neglecting to enforce the landlord's diagnosis. Such attempts as this bring legislation and legislators into contempt. If it is "looming in the future" that by and by the bad character and the prostitute are to have nor food, nor drink, nor place to lie, being already sufficiently prohibited from wandering about:—if none but persons of high reputation for soberness and chastity are to be received into public house or coffee house after ten o'clock, under very serious penalties, we had better, I think, re-establish the curfew at once, with a clause in the Act entitled "Constables required to see everybody safe in bed," and prepare for some unpleasant consequences.

DOMICILIARY REGULATIONS APPLICABLE TO THE HOMES OF PROSTITUTES.

Upon this question, no less important than others I have rather endeavoured to lay before the reader than pretended to solve, great difference of opinion prevails, and we must profit by domestic as well as foreign experience in framing proposed additions to our present system.

"Close them all! Down with them—to the very ground—and that at once!" says some enthusiast. "Can any doubt exist about it? Whatever we do for society, or the prostitute, let us begin by getting rid of these plague spots, these incitements to vice and ministering aids to evil desires!" "But, first of all, turn," I say, "to Berlin and to Rome. Call figures fictions, domestic prostitution a nightmare, if you will; take liberal discount from my statements, and those of my corroborators, on account of inaccuracy, and then even you *must* think twice before you propose for a land of liberty such high and mighty regulation as has so signally failed in States where civil and religious power is strong enough, if any where, to make men good by beat of drum and wave of censer."

Let us inquire what is the state of the law. The subjoined extract from a memorial recently addressed to the Home Secretary will serve to show the present state of the law bearing upon brothels:—

"That houses kept for the purpose of prostitution have become alarmingly numerous in this parish and neighbourhood, and are not only highly injurious to the public morals, but also seriously detrimental to the value of property. That although the legislature has, of late years,

made provision for the more easy suppression of gaming and other vices, the law relating to brothels has wholly escaped revision, and the statute under which proceedings must be taken to suppress such nuisances, is more than a century old (25th George II., chap. 36). That the evidence required to support a prosecution under that statute is of a very complicated nature, and that in most cases it is requisite to engage the services of a person, if not actually to commit a criminal act, at least under the semblance and pretence of doing so, to obtain admittance to a house, for the purpose of identifying the persons apparently acting as the keepers thereof. That the persons acting in the direct management of such houses are frequently only servants, the real keepers not residing on the premises; and in a recent prosecution by this parish at the Middlesex Sessions against the real owner of one of these houses, although clear proof was adduced of the hiring and payment of wages by him to the servant in the house, who attended on the visitors, and of his receiving, through that servant, rent of the lodgers, the present assistant-judge felt himself compelled to direct an acquittal, on the ground that the evidence was insufficient to show an interference in the immediate management of the house as a brothel; and thus a notorious offender, having four other houses in the parish open of a similar kind, after putting the ratepayers to very heavy expenses, escaped punishment. That it by no means follows, as the law is administered, that a conviction of this offence is succeeded by an adequate, or indeed any, punishment—the usual course being, on proof that the house, in respect of which the defendant stood indicted, has been closed, to allow him to be discharged on entering into recognizances to come up for judgment when called upon for any renewed offence—a course, it is submitted, not very likely to intimidate persons of this class, or to discourage others from the pursuit of a similar calling. That persons carrying on this occupation have become emboldened by the difficulties and expense with which they are aware the enforcement of the law is attended, and that some of the best business streets in this parish are now infested by houses of this character, where, in the lower portion, an ostensible ordinary trade is frequently carried on as a blind, producing this additional evil, that no female, however high in rank or exemplary in conduct, whilst merely entering a shop to make a purchase, is safe from the imputation of having been seen visiting a house of improper description. That the consequences of the introduction of these houses to a respectable neighbourhood are ruinous to the very many householders who gain their livelihood by letting their apartments, and pernicious to the public morals from the presence of temptation and opportunity for vice, in quarters which are frequented by persons who would be deterred, by regard for their character, from resorting to neighbourhoods of notorious ill repute.”

Various and repeated attempts have been made to put down brothels and accommodation houses in London; and the abortive result of the depositions and memorials I have referred to typify the success which has attended them. I have good authority for saying, that the police administration, wisely admitting the value of experience gained elsewhere, have concluded that such attempts are inadvisable as long as exterior decency can be maintained. Houses of ill-fame are usually

confined, from considerations common to their proprietors, lodgers, and frequenters, to certain localities already past spoiling; and the temporary adjustment of the question is acquiesced in by parochial authorities, not as sanctioning such institutions, but through fear of worse eventualities, hereinbefore suggested. The efforts of power, therefore, are mainly directed to the prevention of public notorious scandal and discontent, and the repression of active disorder.

The keepers of the 2825 houses referred to in the return on page 16 are so well aware of the conditions of the subsisting truce, that with the exception of the very lowest, belonging to the class of the people who are born, live, and die at war with society, they consult their own interest by unreserved compliance with public order regulations. A stranger walking through some of the quiet but most notorious streets would little guess their character. No open doors are observed as in Continental towns, no flaring light or giant figures, no women lurking about, for this is obviously not their field of operations. Their dwellings are of external respectability, and their use only known to the *habitués* or to neighbours, who either gladly avail themselves of the lightly-gotten money circulating there, or court the advantages of low rents in a bad locality.

By referring to page 83, it will be seen that the French authorities set their faces against *maisons de passe*, or houses appropriated to the temporary accommodation of prostitutes and their frequenters. What is the result in Paris? When a young man takes up his residence in almost any quarter of the French capital, it is understood that his *appartement* may be indicated by the *concierge* to any well-dressed female asking for him. She may take her meals, and pass the night with him without any great scandal. The recorded number of pairs of ladies' boots left out to be cleaned every morning in one of the leading *hôtels garnis* frequented by single men, would be considered fabulous; but I have seen enough of such evidence to convince me that the accommodation-house in Paris would be, as far as middle class young men are concerned, an utter superfluity.

I need not ask the reader to picture to himself his London landlady's horror if good-looking girls, names unknown, were continually calling upon him; or to fancy the welcome she would extend to such visitors. All single men must be aware that in London notice to quit would be soon given to any tenant who received known prostitutes at his lodgings.

This sanctity of the private house being so generally claimed and acknowledged among ourselves, it is not surprising that meetings should take place either at the home of the female or, pursuant to assignation, at accommodation brothels. I submit that the existence of these houses is to a certain extent the defence of our hearths, and that the use of them indicates a superior condition of morality, which their forcible suppression might very possibly tend to shake.

Complaints are sometimes heard on the part of house-owners, that certain streets have obtained too evil a reputation for respectable persons to inhabit them, but so great are the precautions taken, except in neighbourhoods long past pollution, that it is very difficult for the law to interfere. Discrimination, moreover, is not always easy as to the *locus standi* of the applicant for relief. A person, for instance, living in

Norton-street, not long ago memorialized the vestry of my parish against the annoyance he experienced from the arrival of parties of gentlemen at the house opposite his own, who were no sooner admitted than persons at his drawing-room windows were shocked by the sight of naked women chasing one another about their apartment, and committing other acts of the most disgusting indelicacy.

The result was, I believe, inaction—and partly so because in the particular case it could not be denied that the complainant had moved to the nuisance. But in cases like the above, which are happily very exceptional, the feelings of all good citizens would go with the authorities in putting on the extreme of pressure the law permits, however inexpedient that may generally be.

Few will deny, I think, that it should be competent to the community to suspend in its own interest the inviolability of the domicile where the Englishman's castle is so grossly perverted into a battery against English morality as in the case just recited, and in that of a recent brothel robbery in Norton-street. The outside public were on the latter occasion aware that assault and plunder were being enacted within doors, but neither public nor police, except at their legal peril, might force an entry, or interfere without request of the occupier, who was himself least likely to demand the assistance of the laws he was engaged in violating.*

We may by no means deprive the female of the right to abandon

* It is right, the more especially as some of my observations may favour the impression of my too lenient disposition towards such characters, that I should condense so much of the newspaper report of this case as seems necessary to exhibit the compulsory inaction of the police outside, while violence and robbery were going on within, the occasional excesses to which brothel-keepers give way, and the certainty of their reaping punishment in the shape of financial ruin, if in no other. It is some consolation to know that though the guilty parties have escaped—I apprehend through the necessities of the complainant—still Mr. Sheriff Lynch and his *posse comitatûs* subsequently nearly destroyed the premises, and would have exterminated the tenants had they caught them.

Three parties, a man and wife keeping a brothel, and a prostitute, were charged with committing a murderous assault on a young man, who appeared with his head and face shockingly bruised and cut, his clothes torn from his back, and his whole appearance indicative of having been engaged in a long and deadly struggle. He said he met the prostitute in the Haymarket, and was taken by her to Norton-street. He gave a sovereign to the other female prisoner, who he supposed kept the house, and told her to get a bottle of wine. The wine was brought, but no change. He asked for his change, if only ten shillings, or five shillings, but he could not get any money. He said he would not be robbed in that barefaced way, and should get a constable. He was going out for that purpose, when the woman he had entered with collared him, and swore he should not leave the house. Fearing, from the menacing manner of the parties, that some mischief was intended, he pushed away the one who had hold of him, intending to make his escape. The women called out, and the male prisoner came upstairs with a poker in his hand, and saying he would teach him what fighting was, struck him repeatedly over the head. He put up his arm to ward off the blows, otherwise his skull would have been beaten in. His hand was much bruised, and a ring on his finger was bent by the blows with the poker. He managed to get to the street-door, calling, "Murder! Help! Police!" The landlady followed him, and pulled him back, whereby his coat was nearly torn into pieces. The male prisoner also had hold of him, dragged him into a room, and closed the door. He rushed to the window, threw it up, and called "Police!" several times. A private constable came into the house, but declined to interfere, although he must have known the state of the case. A mob having got about the house, the people swore they would break open the door unless they were admitted. The door was at length opened, several policemen and others entered, and then the prisoners were taken into custody. Witness's head

herself privately for love, lust, or lucre, the last of which is clearly prostitution. Her right to see and be seen in the streets she enjoys in common with all well-conducted Christian women. No necessity can be shown for restricting her incomings and outgoings. The correction of her public excesses against order and sobriety is already provided for. But the "organization of prostitution," the binding into stubborn bundles the detached arrows of immorality, offers, I think, fair pretence for public interference in self-defence. It might be insisted on, and without detriment, I repeat, to morality, because, as I have said, to deal with any crime, any vice, implies not sanction, but recognition, that all houses and persons notoriously harbouring prostitutes, if not already under the operation of Licensed Victuallers' or Common Lodging-house Acts, should be compelled or compellable to become so. No serious opposition would arise, because the gains of the trade are too large and the consciences of its followers too elastic, to allow of their either resigning or denying their business through disgust at licensing or registration; their avocations are necessarily too public to admit of quibbling of any kind. Thus we should bring all casinos, pleasure-gardens, brothels, and accommodation-houses not already under supervision as licensed public-houses, under the action of a special branch of the police, who should have powers of domiciliary visitation, and be charged by all means with the extermination of absolute *dealing* in prostitutes, which should be distinctly recognised as a pursuit largely followed, and be made henceforth as penal as is the trade in virginity under the Bishop of Oxford's Act. Thus also the oppression of women by lodging-house keepers, the robbery of the latter by the former, and the demeanour of both towards their male customers, would be more under check than at present.

It is fair to say that more than one of the most eminent lawyers who have illuminated the seat of justice in this country have expressed themselves against domiciliary visitation as "contrary to the spirit of the English law."

This registration once admitted necessary, legalized, and conceded to the authorities, we should secure returns from time to time of the number of inmates, which should be limited according to the accommodation of the place. The improper character of any unregistered house should be established by its presentment to the police department by parochial authorities, who in turn must be moved by rated inhabitants of good character and standing.

The sifting of evidence necessary to the accomplishment of these steps would, I imagine, be held ample to justify the police in exercising their right of inviting the registration of disorderly premises, and subse-

and body were cut and bruised in various places, and the violence he sustained was so great as to render him for some time insensible.—This was the complainant's statement.

A witness saw one of the females holding the complainant by the hair, and trying to throw him over the banisters.

A policeman deposed to having entered with another constable, and found the complainant bleeding from the mouth and head. Witness took the three prisoners to the station-house.

The complainant's head was found badly wounded, and with a blunt instrument, and cross-examination appeared not to shake his evidence: but the case being adjourned he never appeared again.

quently that of visitation. No great anxiety should be displayed to bring persons or houses within the operation of either one or other: but so little synonymous are recognition and patronage of vice, that great benefit would accrue from the mere desire of all parties concerned to keep without them. The first and second offences against order by registered brothel-keepers should be visited by fine, and the third by withdrawal of the licence, not from the person only, but from the house, in addition to other punishments now provided.

This would have the effect of rendering brothel-keepers such precarious tenants, that they would find constant difficulty in securing houses. The business would then be confined (as is to some extent the case now) to freeholders, whose property—as a third offence would entail ruin or a change of pursuits—would be security to society, if not for morality, at least for good order. The opening of unlicensed haunts of any kind should be severely punished, and a penalty imposed upon entertainment of young persons. It is needless to add that as women would for the most part have to be dealt with, the service of inspection should be entrusted to none but persons of high character, untouched by fanaticism, and gifted with more than an average temper and discretion.

CHAPTER VIII.

SANITARY REGULATIONS ABROAD AND AT HOME.

I was much struck by Lord Robert Grosvenor's candid avowal, on the Middlesex hustings of 1857, of his conviction, better late than never, that the English will not become virtuous at the strappado. Being asked by an elector whether, if returned, he would introduce his celebrated and abortive Sunday Bill? his Lordship replied, "That he might possess the courage, but not the foolhardiness, to propose measures which experience taught him were distasteful to the majority of his constituents; and he took the opportunity of stating that he had been misinformed on the subject. Had he believed that the Bill would have received such opposition, he would not have introduced it."*

Should the imitation of this discretion and this candour, which I hope are not mere election amenities, become popular among those who have always looked to his Lordship as a leader and an authority, there is some room for hope of larger results in future from the vast amount of philanthropic and religious zeal heretofore working to waste, because not adequately tempered by judgment and knowledge of the world; and that, possibly, even some little portion of its spare power may be utilized in curbing the evil tendencies, and palliating the evil consequences, of the great and confessedly incurable social evil we are treating of.

Although interference with the out-door pursuits and amusements of public women, beyond the limits I have prescribed, is neither convenient nor likely to be gravely entertained by any government: it by no means follows that society has exhausted its power of modifying, as well for its own benefit as for that of the lost, but never irrecoverable prostitute, both the ravages of disease and want upon herself, and her dangerous propagative action upon mankind.

Although the adoption in England of the compulsory and exceptional sanitary regulations which prevail abroad must ever be impracticable, if not impossible, because unconstitutional, it cannot for a moment be denied that a certain amount of misery must be alleviated by them. Hence arises the urgency (pretending, as we do in England, to high civilization and enlarged Christian charity) of our inquiring, whether some scheme or other of syphilis-repression may not be found compatible with our free institutions.

I shall hereafter touch upon the steps which strike me as most likely to be efficient, and I hope it will appear as feasible to others as to myself, to accomplish some good without interference with liberty or encouragement

* "The Times," March 31st, 1857.

of vice ; and I have, at all events, to hope and pray that a charitable construction may be put upon my endeavour.

I shall hereafter argue that the prostitute should be instructed how little short of inevitable is disease—how injurious, when it comes, to herself and others—how its evil consequences to herself and her fortunes must be aggravated by neglect and continued pursuit of her calling—by what precautions its advent may be retarded—how its presence may be recognised—and how fatal, after recognition, may be delay.

But my immediate task—and I confess to approaching it with diffidence and misgiving—is to show, as best I may, how the hand of the public may be stretched out to and imposed upon the sick woman, at once assisting and controlling her, for her temporal and, I hope, eternal good—for its own protection against both moral and physical suffering and depravation.

What becomes of a diseased prostitute ? She may herself, for a time, be unconscious that she is a distributor of poison to others and herself, in the path of physical annihilation. This cannot last long, and the plague must sooner or later be recognised by the stricken. Her first impression is incredulity ; her first plan is secrecy. No inspector is bound to verify her condition—no lodging-house keeper compelled, under penalty, to report her if diseased—no stranger dare challenge her. She is, of course, indebted, and looks for active unkindness if she shows a symptom of being insolvent. Were she to impeach herself before men she could not hope for a living ; so for a time she lets her secret gnaw her very soul, while corruption devours her frame. She feeds the flame with the liquor that dulls her senses, and, maybe, throws away, perhaps, upon some murderous quack, what little money she can lay her hands on. But the day soon comes when the quack can draw no more money, and the housekeeper no more rent—when even the labour of search after prey becomes oppressive, and connexion unendurable. So, whether she be a destitute outcast or a barely-tolerated inmate of the lodging-house, she must, perforce, seek gratuitous relief. She has been for four, five, or six weeks after first discovering her condition, a minister of destruction among men, and each week of that period has added, by intensifying the complaint, perhaps a fortnight to the length of treatment necessary. She has caused a frightful damage to the human race ; in some cases a damage which will last for generations. She has shortened her own expectation of life. And all this would have been obviated had she, by force or her own common sense, been brought a few weeks sooner under surgical treatment.

I cannot believe—and I take every opportunity, at the risk of the reader's weariness, of so saying—that this woman is, as some would have it, a vessel chosen for this destructive and suicidal mission, or that her hindrance in it would be impious or inexpedient. But, reserving this point—which, after all, each must settle for himself by the light of reason and his own good conscience—let me proceed to inquire what next becomes of a sick public prostitute ?

She has three courses open to her, and these are—the foul ward of an hospital, the infirmary of a workhouse, or that of a jail.

As the law stands, every diseased and destitute woman, whatever her class or calling, may apply to the parochial authorities of her quarter,

who, unless they can establish the liability upon other shoulders, are bound to administer relief. But what a relief is that! Though I have small wish to appear inimical to parochial officers generally, I must state my impression that, perhaps through mistaken views of morality, they practically throw every legal obstacle in the way of the harlot seeking relief. She is, in the first place, required to prove her settlement. This done, and other tedious formalities complied with, the smallest modicum of alms consistent with the letter of the law is given, and the sick woman who has once had the courage or desperation to face the dreadful preliminary ordeal of Bumbledom, must go through it again and again to get mere out-door relief, until the passive resistance of official forms has triumphed over the strength of the law and her resolution, and she gives up in disgust the unsatisfactory pursuit of such misnamed charity.

Her remaining alternatives are—the public hospital, to which she may be admitted, in her turn, on the occurrence of a vacancy; and the prison hospital, to which she may obtain entrance by the avenue of the police court.

It will here be, I think, convenient that I should give the reader some idea of the foreign treatment of venereal patients. It is, moreover, no less than due, that, having freely characterized some regulations prevalent among our neighbours as despotic, barely legal, and incompatible with English freedom, I should not be silent upon the benevolent completeness with which their executives carry out their portion of an implied covenant, by returning cure for control. I should never recommend that domiciliary police visitation (except in rare and fairly exceptional instances, or compulsory medical inspection) should be engrafted upon our institutions; but it is otherwise with the magnificent hospital systems which are a glory of poorer nations, and their boast, when compared with the miserable arrangements, which know-nothingism imposes upon ourselves.

Pursuing, therefore, the same plan as with regard to the external aspect of prostitution, I shall place in juxtaposition, the organized treatment of venereal disease in some foreign capitals, and the *mesquine* barrier which private benevolence is able, with all the best of will, to oppose to a rushing torrent of evil—the hap-hazard provision it can make for its noble attempt to discharge a proper liability of the State.

The earliest official recognition of syphilis by the French was in 1497 and 1498, when an hospital for the “protection” of poor destitute males from infection—for contagion was not then imagined to be a cause—was decreed by the Parliament of Paris. The necessity of *curing* was first acknowledged in 1505, but the malady was unchecked until the compulsory establishment of the parochial dispensary of St. Eustache, in 1536. This, like many succeeding experiments, was abortive, and it was only in 1614 that, by joint action of the Hôtel Dieu committee and the Bureau des Pauvres, a service was organized for male patients; but as corporal chastisement was exhibited with the medicaments of the period, the institution for cure of “la gross vérole,” as it was called, made but little progress.

The first Parisian female hospital was in a corner of the prison of La Salpêtrière, established in 1657, for the punishment of disorderly women. Its patients, and those of the above-mentioned male hospital, were subse-

quently moved to the Hospice de Bicêtre, where in 1730 there were 400 patients, all in the direst wretchedness and neglect. The horrors of Bicêtre were atrocious,—in spite of all attempts to remedy them by Maréchal, the Court Physician; the minister Breteuil, who was shocked on an inspection in 1784; and other reformers—until great improvements were introduced by Michel Cullerier, appointed surgeon in 1787. This able and virtuous man persuaded the Constituent Assembly, in 1792, to remove his charges to the then new Hôpital du Midi.

In 1812, sixty beds for venereal patients were organized at the Hôpital St. Louis; and in 1815, when the invasion brought a frightful amount of disease into the town, additional accommodation became again necessary. La Petite Force prison was made a subsidiary hospital, and subsequently a part of the Hôpital la Pitié being also called into similar use, the municipality, who had theretofore not flinched, sought assistance from the public treasury. The Minister of the Interior demurred. The Prefect Anglès insisted that this was not a local but a public question; but without avail. No material progress was made. The dispute as to the expense entirely prevented it; and when Parent-Duchâtelet wrote, he lamented that no special hospital for diseased women existed, as well as a special prison for the criminal and disorderly; these institutions being at the time of his death still amalgamated. In 1835, however, the body whom we might here denominate the Board of Hospital Commissioners, recognised the propriety of the separation, and the *régime* which now prevails was set on foot.

The venereal hospitals of Paris are Saint-Lazare, for police female patients, say 200 beds; Lourcine, female, 270 beds; Du Midi, free male, 336 beds, of which 22 are reserved for patients who can pay 1s. 3d. per diem. There are also a limited number of beds for peculiar cases in the General Hospital, St. Louis, and about 15 or 20 reserved for paying patients at the Maison Dubois, or Municipal Infirmary, in the Rue du Faubourg St. Denis.

The SAINT-LAZARE HOSPITAL, in the Faubourg St. Denis, combines an infirmary for females with what we should here term a bridewell. It is under the control of the prefect of police, whose department consigns to it all the regularly enrolled females reported unsound by the medical branch, and the captured *insoumises* who are found diseased upon examination at the dépôts. The infirmary department is under the direction of two physicians, two house surgeons, an apothecary, twenty-two wardswomen, and eight Sisters of Charity of the order of Marie Joseph. The patients are very carefully classed with a view to the separation of the old from the young, and the hardened from those whose reclamation is not hopeless. Such as manifest a disposition to return to their parents are sedulously kept apart. The total of beds is about 300, of which 200 occupy the venereal wards.

The following table of admissions is furnished by Messrs. Trebuchet and Poirat-Dâuval, who have together superintended the last edition of Parent-Duchâtelet's work. I have every reliance upon the accuracy of any figures relative to the French hospitals furnished by these gentlemen, as they are both of them connected with the Prefecture of Police.

		1853.	1854.
Filles de Maison de Paris.	Syphilis	307	313
"	" Banlieue. "	214	263
"	" Isolées "	120	124
Non-specific and Uterine Affections		350	353
Insoumises.	Syphilis	313	460
"	Non-specific and Uterine Affections . .	212	282
		1516	1800

The mortality from all causes was, in 1853 16

" " " 1854 17

The LOURCINE HOSPITAL was, after long and anxious consideration, established by the Hospital Board, in 1836, as a free receptacle for unregistered (officially *du civil*) syphilitic females. Of its 276 beds, there are 36, in a distinct ward, appropriated to mothers suckling infected infants, and 13 to girls under fifteen years of age.* The "service" comprises three superior and seven subordinate medical officers, 12 Sisters of Charity of the order of La Compassion, and 13 wardswomen, besides other female servants; and its expenses amounted in 1855 to 181,543 francs, or 7261*l*.

	Adults.	Girls under sixteen.	Total.
The admissions were, in 1854	1358	127	1485
" " " in 1855	1384	82	1466
The average of eleven years being ...	1398	80	1478

No less than 85 of the children in 1854, and 60 in 1855, were born syphilized within the walls, or introduced under two years of age with their mothers—a frightful proof of suffering entailed upon innocents by the depravity of their parents. The numerical disproportion of their deaths to those of adults has been already noticed at p. 61, and other interesting figures with regard to the statistics of this hospital will be found on the following pages.

On application, the patients are examined with the speculum, and as often subsequent to admission as may be considered necessary. A part of each ward is partitioned off, and secured within it from the observation of all other inmates, those designated for the operation are successively inspected.

It has been found, in practice, that the few who object are females of the most shameless and abandoned description, who cling to the idea of being cured without revealing even to the medical staff the entire extent of their disease. Friends of patients are, under ordinary circumstances, admitted on two days a week. The interviews usually take place through a grating, and in presence of a Sister; but when the visitors are relatives, these precautions (which are enforced to control, as far as possible, the recruiting operations of the *dames de maison*) are dispensed with. Threatened suspension of the privilege in case of disorderly or indecorous behaviour is found generally sufficient to ensure the quiet and propriety of the hospital. It is an interesting fact, well

* M. Battel observes with profound regret the number of young girls from twelve to fifteen years of age infected with syphilis, and sometimes exhibiting traces of violence. This he ascribes partly to the prevalence among the lowest class of an execrable superstition, to the effect that connexion with a child is a cure for syphilis in the male.

worthy of observation, that, though at neither Lourcine nor Saint-Lazare is attendance at religious worship made compulsory, the ceremonial is for the most part eagerly and devoutly observed by all who are not bed-ridden, and the chaplains produce pleasing evidence of the value of their reformatory counsels.

The inmates of the Lourcine are employed—for employment is the mainstay of morality as idleness is the handmaid of evil—under the direction of the lady visitors and at certain very trifling wages, about the entire household service, washing, and needlework of the institution. They may quit the establishment at their own pleasure, even before being cured. In the latter case, urgent remonstrances are offered, and every kind of official delay is interposed; but should this, as indeed rarely happens, fail to restrain them, they are of course placed under the surveillance of the sanitary police as pestiferous, and therefore dangerous to public health.

The HÔPITAL DU MIDI, of 314 free beds for males only, where also are treated not less than 140 or 150 out-patients daily, is under the management of the celebrated M. Ricord, M. Cullerier, and a third surgeon, aided by a staff of seven other medical officers of various grades, and forty attendants. Its expenses for the year 1855 were 203,123 francs, or 8125*l*. As, unfortunately, there is not the same opportunity of employing the patients as in the female hospitals, their sufferings from want of thought have been considerably abridged by the formation of a lending library of 700 volumes. The devotion by the Hospital Board of twenty-two beds to persons who can pay a franc and a-half per diem in consideration of seclusion, has proved, as may readily be imagined, a boon to many an unfortunate sufferer, disqualified by his antecedents for the very mixed society in the free wards, but too poor, or perhaps too proud, to secure in private such advice as is open at the Midi to all comers.

The number of admissions for half a century, by periods of ten years, and also during the years 1854 and 1855, with the mean stay in hospital and mortality, appear in the following tables, which offer some facilities for comparing the male and female venereal statistics, as returned by the Male Hospitals and the Lourcine:—

MALE HOSPITALS.				LOURCINE.			
Decennial period.	Annual average number of adult men admitted.	Mean stay during period. Days.	Deaths.	Annual average number of adult females.	Mean stay during period. Days.	Deaths.	Children under 16, of both sexes, admitted.
1805 to 1814	1392	57	1 in 56	1294	65	1 in 67	
1815 to 1824	1196	61	1 in 62	1248	71	1 in 57	
1825 to 1834	1438	45	1 in 80	1743	50	1 in 88	
1835 to 1844	3246*	32	1 in 126	1633	47	1 in 97	1698
1845 to 1855 (eleven years)	3120	33	1 in 168	1398	57	1 in 72	1435

* This increase was due to the concentration in 1835, at the Midi, of venereal males who had previously been treated elsewhere.

MALES (H. DU MIDI).			FEMALES (LOURCINE)	
Years.	Admissions.	Mean stay during year. Days.	Admissions.	Mean stay during year. Days.
1845	2931	36·18	1419	56·65
1846	2789	38·22	1574	49·84
1847	2837	37·21	1384	61·73
1848	2747	36·12	2149	45·70
1849	2772	36·06	1381	49·86
1850	3159	32·94	1247	58·78
1851	3019	33·47	1102	66·51
1852	3367	30·23	1114	64·38
1853	3660	30·00	1274	56·21
1854	3425	31·06	1358	62·75
1855	3632	29·72	1384	59·89
Total ...	34,338		15,386	
Mean ...	3121	33·46	1399	57·20

Adult Males at Hôpital du Midi.

	1854.	1855.
Admissions	3425	3632
Mean stay	31·06	29·72
Venereal mortality	15	34

Adult Females at Lourcine.

Admissions	1358	1384
Mean stay	62·75	59·89
Venereal mortality	0	1

Population of Paris, 1,337,153.

The preceding tables call for a few remarks.

1. The extraordinary rise in the number of patients at the Midi in the ten years following 1835 was due to the concentration there during those years of patients previously treated elsewhere. The male returns, therefore, since 1835 may be taken to refer to that hospital alone.

2. Mortality of infants and children under sixteen has been given in previous pages.

3. Out-patient returns are not included.

4. The actual admissions of males into hospital during 1855 exceeded by 25 per cent. those of 1845, and have an upward tendency. Their mean stay has been gradually shortened to the extent of 16 per cent. during the same period, while the corresponding admission of females shows the very slight decrease of 2·40 per cent., and their mean stay a prolongation of 5·70 per cent.

Although the average of males under treatment during the period from 1845 exceeded by 55 per cent. that of the period ending 1814,* their average stay in hospital had diminished from 57 days to 33, or 42 per cent. The variation in the female averages during the half century appears not quite so trifling as during the last decennial period. The

* See also p. 47.

admissions have on the whole increased 8 per cent ; the length of illness has shortened 12 per cent. ; and mortality has decreased 8 per cent.

An enormous increase of female sickness followed the Revolution of 1848, and that among the males after the troubles of 1850 is still more marked. The St. Lazare Hospital received at the latter period 150 patients in excess of its proper accommodation. The duration of female sickness during the term of eleven years ending 1855 was to that of the male as 57·20 to 33·46—*i.e.*, it was 40 per cent. longer. It is alleged by the officials that the mean duration of the disease among the *soumisés* at St. Lazare—in whose persons it is supposed to be arrested at an early period by the visiting surgeons before having made great ravages—is as much as forty-five days.

During a recent visit to Paris, I asked M. Ricord, who has had a thirty years' experience of hospital direction, and is thoroughly superior to the prejudices in favour of the *vie antique* which are not seldom contemporary with such length of service, whether he had any idea as to improving the system of venereal management in Paris. He was of opinion that no change could be advantageously introduced beyond rendering the sanitary police examination of registered women yet more accurate, and permitting the unregistered to enter all the hospitals indiscriminately. The obligation now imposed upon this class of repairing to the Lourcine only, thereby making public the nature of their ailments, and setting a stamp upon their pursuits, acts, he thinks, prejudicially, by causing concealment, neglect, and aggravation of disease.

Berlin.—The CHARITY HOSPITAL, specially devoted to the treatment of venereal diseases, is supported to a great extent by public funds, and partly, as has been seen, by contributions exacted from prostitutes. It must, however, be noted, that owing to the strict sanitary regulations enforced, these probably furnish but few of the cases whose length of stay in the hospital appear to indicate a marked degree of severity. The majority of the latter are, I think, traceable to clandestinity.

The following return of in-patients, and the duration of their cases, is compiled from the registers of the establishment, and cannot fail to be interesting :

Year.	Admissions. Males.	Days in hospital.	Admissions. Females.	Days in hospital.
1844	741	21	657	31
1845	711	26	514	42
1846	813	30	627	51
1847	894	34	761	43
1848	979	33	835	53

The report made in May, 1853, to the Berlin Board of Public Morals, by Dr. Stumpf, chief medical officer of the King's Guard, upon the health of the garrison, then numbering 19,030 men, is worth consideration. It is to be regretted that the Doctor did not append the strength of the forces in question at the earlier dates to which his report refers. Supposing it to have been equal at the various periods, there must have been the surprising reduction in the number of syphilitic cases of 50 per cent.

in two years, and 64 per cent. during the three years following the re-introduction of toleration and increased activity of the inspection.*

He says:—"In answer to the letter* of the Board, dated April 30, 1853, I have to report that, among other things, we have observed, during the last few years, a remarkable diminution of syphilis among the garrison. While in the year 1849 there were 1423 cases,

	in 1850	"	526	"
	1851	"	526	"
in the first quarter of 1853	"	"	59	"

Also, in respect of intensity, the disease forms a most favourable contrast with that of former years. In my opinion, the above numerical proportion furnishes the most sufficient proof of the utility of the existing sanitary regulations."

Brussels.—From the returns of the Saint-Pierre, the public venereal hospital of Brussels,† to which are consigned pauper males and the women (*soumises* and *insoumises*) found diseased upon examination at the police dispensary, Dr. Marinus, to whom I have before been indebted, has extracted materials from which I compile the following table. I have incorporated with it the return for five years of the Garrison Hospital:

Year.	Public women entered.	Free women entered.	Males.	Total civil return.	Military hospital return.
1846	323	58	—	—	—
1847	519	125	—	—	—
1848	532	157	—	—	—
1849	498	113	—	—	—
1850	365	98	—	—	—
1851	327	56	—	—	—
1852	298	76	261	635	361
1853	280	89	206	575	360
1854	297	57	235	589	357
1855	228	53	233	514	216
1856	137	50	212	399	413

These, it will be observed, are in-patients treated at the public expense, the returns noticing neither out-patients nor those relieved at private dispensaries. The Brussels physician seems to claim, with some degree of hesitation, the diminished frequency of syphilis in that city; for he is perfectly cognizant of this fact, and, indeed, admits it in the context, that the strictness of the police within the town has driven both prostitution and its attendant diseases to the suburbs, where the extent of one and the ravages of the others are alike beyond control and calculation.

Hamburg.—The clandestine prostitutes apprehended by the police are consigned to the Kurhaus Hospital of this town. The registered, with a few others, and males, are treated at the Krankenhaus. The latter enjoys a subsidy (see p. 86) of 5000 marks from the Registration Fee

* British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review, Jan. 1854, p. 125.

† See also p. 47.

Fund. In the year 1845 it received 592 females, of whom 521 were enrolled, and 71 unregistered. The mean stay of the former class was 53 days, and of the latter 74. The syphilitic males treated at this hospital were 355 in 1843, 335 in 1844, 316 in 1845.

Vienna is celebrated, among other things, for its syphilitic hospital, which possesses one of the finest collections of preparations in Europe. It devotes 200 beds to males, and 150 to females.

Lyons.—Dr. Potton, who has published an admirable statistical and medical review of prostitution in Lyons, informs us that the Antiquaille Hospital in that city, maintained by the municipality, will accommodate 128 female patients, and is, on an average, occupied by 85 or 90; and has also 110 beds for males, always full. The *Dispensaire Spécial* treats, in round numbers, 1100 males and 250 females per annum, and the out-patient service attached to the Antiquaille is also extensive.

Strasburg.—The diseased prostitutes of Strasburg are treated in a special department of the Civil Hospital, comprising 40 beds, in three spacious wards—*inscrites* being kept apart from all others. The accommodation is complained of by Dr. Strohl as being far too restricted—so much so, indeed, that beds have to be made up on the floors of the wards, and, worse still, the patients are frequently discharged to recommence their operations before their sores are safely healed. The civil male patients are treated in other wards of the same hospital. The venereal sickness of the garrison has been noticed at page 47. The number of prostitutes of all classes affected in 1855 was 544; and in 1856, 493. Since the introduction of strict *surveillance* over clandestine prostitution, it is claimed by the officials that the intensity of the complaint, as evinced by average length of stay in hospital, has been vastly mitigated. In 1847, the latter was 44 days; and followed the progression of 44, 40, 38, 30, 30, 31, and 25 days, until, in 1855, it became 24 days.

LONDON.

LOCK HOSPITAL.

Let us now turn to London, a city of 2,500,000 souls, and we find only ONE little institution *specially* devoted to the treatment of venereal diseases—the LOCK HOSPITAL,* formerly of Southwark, now of Westbourne Green, the existence of which for more than a century has been

* Mr. Cunningham, in his "Handbook of London," tells that "Lock is derived from the French word *loques*, signifying rags, bandages, lint; hence, also, locks of hair, wool, &c." But as the Lock Hospital in Southwark was founded, I believe, on the site of a house for lepers, who were formerly kept in restraint, I incline to prefer the obvious etymology to the more recondite one promoted by that ingenious author. The following passage is from Turner's work on syphilis (p. 175), published in 1724:—"As to your desire of knowing how many patients might be taken into the Lock Hospital, Southwark, I here send you an exact account of those that were admitted and discharged from that house in 1720, which was the last year they were under my direction.

"Admitted from January 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ ³ inclusive to January, 1720, exclusive	...	115
Cured and discharged	...	108
Died	...	7

"SAM. PALMER."

one continued struggle. Unsupported by Parliamentary grants or metropolitan local funds, the Lock Hospital derived, in 1856, 1292*l.* 18*s.* of its trifling income from the voluntary contributions which do honour to the liberality of a very limited body of subscribers, and from the half-profits of a chapel (!) 227*l.* 9*s.* It relieves, at one time, about 45 in and 250 out-patients. The totals, in 1856, were of the former 397, of the latter 2170, and its entire income was 1505*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.*

It would almost seem to one reading the annual report of the charity, that the governing body are painfully nervous lest its real aim should appear in black and white upon their pages. The spirit of know-nothingism sits heavy on their shoulders, although they hint at its folly in others. They give their time, trouble, and money to the charity, but they hesitate, I see, to avow the character of the good work they are engaged upon. They invite their friends to give publicity to their report and their appeal; but the one is comparatively dumb upon the topics which would have nerved the other. It seems, indeed, as though the hospital were put forward less upon its own merits than under the wing of the affiliated asylum or reformatory, which, though of less public importance, is made so prominent as to divert, I fear, the financial nutriment so much required by its parent. "The mission of such institutions," say the governors, "is to eradicate a wide spread moral as well as physical malady." Should they fall even something short of this, they will have done great things, but if they hope for any material advance from their own present unpromising position, they must shake off unnecessary timidity, appeal to the public and the State, and take much more advantage than heretofore of the nucleus for extended operations offered by the antiquity and repute of the charity they superintend.

I would not have ventured upon this expression of opinion did I not wish well to all concerned, and believe that by giving additional publicity in unflinching terms to its legitimate object and its wants, I may even be doing the Lock Hospital good service.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL, PADDINGTON.

Venereal patients are not admitted.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL

Admits venereal patients in very exceptional cases only. No beds are appropriated to the complaints, but Mr. Erichsen writes me word that possibly one-fourth of the surgical out-patients suffer from syphilis.

KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL

Appropriates six of its 150 beds to venereal females, and males are occasionally admitted into the ordinary wards. The latter being not invariably registered as venereal, and no accurate record of out-patients (beyond their names and addresses) being kept; the medical staff would not be warranted in venturing upon a definite statement. It is however believed that about 6000 out-patients are annually treated in this hospital for venereal complaints.

CHARING-CROSS HOSPITAL

Appropriates no beds to venereal disease, but special cases are admitted on the urgent request of the surgeon. A large number apply for advice and are relieved, but as very few of them obtain governors' letters, their cases are not registered, and therefore no accurate statistics can be procured.

ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL

Appropriates no beds to venereal diseases.

THE ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL

Devotes twenty-six beds to female venereal patients, and none to males. On turning to page 37 it will be seen that a larger proportion of venereal out-patients are here prescribed for than at any other institution in London, forming, according to the average I have established, two out of every three out-patients who apply for surgical assistance.

MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL.

Some years ago, persons labouring under syphilis were not admitted in-patients to the Middlesex Hospital, except on pre-payment of two pounds, and this bye-law was printed on all the letters or petitions for admission. The reason assigned was, that persons who contracted syphilis ought not to partake of a charity intended for more deserving objects than the vicious and licentious. I need not say that evasions became very common, and the regulation practically inoperative. The guardians of workhouses used to send their very bad cases to the hospital, and pay the two pounds; but such patients rarely recovered under many months, and the governors found that their cost far exceeded the amount received for their treatment. This, with the limited number of persons who could afford to pay, the protests of the surgeons, who were unable to teach pupils the treatment of syphilis, and, it is to be hoped, more philanthropic and correct sanitary views on the part of the governors, has erased the law in question from the statute book; and this institution now devotes sixteen separate beds to the gratuitous treatment of venereal cases—namely, eight to females, and eight to males. The numbers received during the last year were sixty-five of the former, and seventy-four of the latter. As far as can be ascertained, the out-patients labouring under venereal affections amounted to four hundred and sixty-five.

LONDON HOSPITAL.

The following bye-law still exists at the London Hospital:—"No person shall be admitted with the venereal distemper, except by the special order of the House Committee, subject to such regulations as they shall from time to time establish." I am informed that there is now no practical impediment to the admission of syphilitic cases, under the head of skin diseases, ulcers, &c., but this, of course, precludes the idea of any record of their number, and, I am sorry to say, I have not been able to obtain any statistics relative to the proportion of venereal diseases among out-patients.

GUY'S HOSPITAL.

I should be doing injustice to Guy's Hospital, were I to pass without encomium the annual report presented to the governors by the superintendent, Dr. Steele. That for 1856, which I have now before me, gives a complete and valuable set of statistics for the year, well worthy of imitation by the managers of all other English hospitals with which I am acquainted. I gather from it, that out of 543 beds the hospital devotes 24 to male venereal cases, and 30 to female; and that the medical staff were last year enabled to treat 526 patients, of whom 401 were cured, 111 relieved, 10 unrelieved, and 4 died, the mortality bears therefore 0·76 per cent. The author of the report says—"During the past three years, the number of applicants with venereal affections has exhibited a considerable increase; and as this excess has been noticeable mainly among the female applicants, its cause may be attributable to the additional accommodation provided by five beds which were added to the female wards about two years since. It is instructive, also, as illustrating a well-established law in connexion with the working of the hospital—that increased accommodation in any one department never fails to be attended with a larger proportionate increase in the number of applicants for relief."

Dr. Steele has been good enough to inform me, since the date of the report, that only one-third of the female candidates eligible for beds can ever be taken into the house. The ages of the venereal patients discharged were—one to five, 0; five to ten, 1; ten to fifteen, 8; fifteen to twenty, 239; twenty to twenty-five, 153; twenty-five to thirty, 71; thirty to forty, 32; forty to fifty, 13; fifty to sixty, 5; total, 522. Of the four deaths, two occurred to patients between the ages of 15 and 20; one between 20 and 25; and one between 30 and 40.

ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL

Devotes sixty-one beds to venereal diseases, of which twenty-five are for females, and thirty-six for males. During the year 1856, there were admitted 165 of the former, and 245 of the latter. No exact information is procurable as to the number of out-patients, but at least one-half of them are venereal.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.

Having been educated at this hospital, I may be pardoned for rejoicing at the noble prominence my *Alma Mater* has been enabled to assume in alleviating the miseries of humanity. This present work of mine may probably be traceable to the unequalled opportunities she afforded me of seeing venereal affections in the commencement of my studies, and the following figures will show how far she must still contribute to the spread of similar knowledge among a host of students. I am much indebted to my friend, Mr. Holmes Coote, the present assistant-surgeon, for the pains he has kindly bestowed upon selecting materials for the subjoined

Tables, showing the grand Total of Beds and of Admissions of all In-patients, during the Year 1856.

Number of beds for males	...	...	...	...	...	319
Admissions, males	...	...	...	...	...	3064
Number of beds for females	...	...	...	...	...	326
Admissions, females	...	...	...	...	...	2869
Total of beds	...	...	...	...	...	645
Total of admissions	...	...	...	...	...	5933

The following numbers are included in those above :—

Beds devoted to venereal males	...	...	...	...	...	25
Admissions, males	...	...	...	...	...	240
Beds devoted to venereal females	...	...	...	...	...	56
Admissions, females	...	...	...	...	...	416
Total of venereal beds	...	...	...	...	...	81
Total of venereal admissions	...	...	...	...	...	656

The number of poor people suffering from every sort of accident and ailment, who annually apply for out-patient relief at the *casualty ward* is from 60,000 to 65,000, a great number of whom, affected with gonorrhœa and syphilis, are consigned to other departments.

The “*registered*,” i.e., *severe out-patient cases*, are treated by the assistant-surgeons to the hospital, and on an average 150 new ones appear weekly, or about 7800 annually, women and children included, of whom about one-third* are affected with venereal ailments.

The last year’s operations of this institution against venereal diseases cannot, at the lowest computation, be said to have extended over less than 12,000 cases.*

It is matter of very serious regret that the officers of St. Bartholomew’s Hospital are obliged, from week to week throughout the year (see p. 33), to make out-patients of a number of destitute women, whose segregation until cured is imperatively called for by every consideration of public health and morality. I need hardly say that this would not occur were the funds under their control as expansive as their anxiety to diffuse the blessings of the institution; but as it is well known that their large revenues are already fully bespoken and worthily expended, it would be unbecoming in me not to repudiate on their behalf the slightest suspicion of shortcoming. Out of the fifty-three applicants catalogued at pp. 33 and 34, no more than eighteen could be received into the house, and the other thirty-five either became out-patients, went off to seek admission elsewhere with infinitely less chance of ultimate success, or more horrible thought still, after becoming out-patients, fell back in many cases upon their miserable avocations—to prowl the streets, to drink, to get worse day by day in spite of all our physic, and to propagate disease for gain, or perish.

The propriety and the utility of treating primary symptoms in prostitutes while they remain out-patients seem alike questionable. One, for instance, grievously afflicted, among the number catalogued above, attracted my particular notice by the superiority of her dress. She

* Compare with statements, pp. 35, 36.

lived, she said, in her own lodgings in a street near the Strand. It is therefore clear she had no home to look to but the streets unless she paid her rent. In the course of the very same evening I was shocked to see this woman, accompanied by another, soliciting (as the Act of Parliament has it) in the street, and to reflect how frightfully she must contaminate any unfortunate man who might yield to her desperate entreaties. In dress and bearing she was by no means a female of the lowest class. No ordinary observer would have recognised her sanitary condition; but there she was—her rent, her food, her clothes to be earned—obliged to drink intoxicating liquor with every man who might offer it, dangerous alike to gentle and simple, the fast young man, or the tipsy father of a family who might be attracted by her pleasing face, and utterly heedless how much she was protracting, perhaps aggravating, her own sufferings. How comparatively futile our morning labours! how inefficacious the eleemosynary drugs!

Advocates of the “know-nothing” system, stand aghast! and ask yourselves if the toleration by society of this emissary of death in the attitude in which I saw her is reconcileable with societies’ duties (if duties it has) to God or man.

Here you see a woman who, patched up by voluntary charity in the morning, knows no other way—nay, whose only possible resource—to get her necessary food, or bed at night, is to sally forth into the streets. The ministers of charity eased her pain this morning; they dressed her sores and gave her drugs. So they will again next Thursday. She may be worse then, or she may have made a little progress in spite of her drinking and her fornication. But in a month she will be no nearer soundness than had she been taken care of by the State within the walls of our hospital for one week; and within that month what a scourge upon society will the surgeons not have kept afoot by their exertions? Here is the power of charity again working to waste. I will not insult you by supposing that you would have had that creature, and the hundreds of whom she is the example, spurned from the gates of every workhouse and hospital, and kicked from every domicile in the name of religion, to perish how and where they might by lingering loathsome disease. That were too absurd. But what you do, virtually, is this: You who, if your principles have any worth in them, should protest against the Lock Hospital, proclaim the foul ward a misappropriation, and excommunicate all who relieve or sympathize with the venereal pariah—you neither protest, nor proclaim, nor excommunicate. You testify against none of these things on principle, but only against their extension—against exchanging for a useful flame that inefficient rushlight of private charity which now serves only to make misery visible.

If you consider it wicked encouragement of vice and countenance of immorality to feed, to clothe, to lodge the syphilitic, you will be satisfied that in these five-and-thirty cases the hospital administration steered clear of these greater sins. But, though you dare not go so far as to claim the entire dismissal of these wretches down the winds of fate, you ought surely, in justice to your principles, to some extent to censure those who wrestled with corruption for their poor bodies, preserved them yet a little longer to defile the earth; perverted charity from what you would allow to be proper objects, and as it were “threw physic to

the dogs." In truth, we are at a dead lock, all of us—hospital authorities, social Radicals, and social Tories.

The same necessity of selection which is imposed upon the house-surgeon by the restricted number of beds at his disposition, works evil also in another way. As long as it is guided, not by philosophical considerations of public morals and public health, but by that sympathy for suffering humanity which animated the munificent founders of our hospitals, and the proper desire of the medical schools to secure the supervision of the most peculiar forms of disease, we shall take as in-patients only those most malignant and complicated cases, wherein the subject is practically incapable of getting about, and thus, by inference, of earning his or her bread. Thus competition among cases is as it were invited, the premium of a bed is held out for successful severity, and it is no exaggeration to say that the invitation is responded to, and the prize contended for, by the unfortunate out-patients who find themselves from week to week "not eligible through seniority," "not yet bad enough" to be taken into the house. The devices, therefore, to which they frequently resort, in order to qualify, are, first to throw away the hospital medicines, and then, reckless of consequences to society, to pursue the best known means of aggravating disease—viz., drunkenness, debauchery, and utter self-neglect.

If the British public could only once conceive the idea that the treatment, cure, and temporary segregation of the syphilitic, was as much and more a matter of public interest as that of the lunatic, whose seclusion all counties, towns, and parishes provide for with such remarkable alacrity, not so much out of love or respect for him as because he is a dangerous thing to be at large, I think I should not long be alone in wishing for equally public recognition of both complaints. The attitude of society towards those afflicted must, of course, differ; for, whereas upon the former we may properly, I think, exercise compulsion, we can do no more with the other than offer inducements and invitation to be made whole.

Were those inducements ample, in the shape of accommodation and treatment, and were the germs of pestilence sought out with more anxiety than the old neglected cases, which are so interesting to the medical classes, we should in a few years have reduced the virulence of hospital syphilis to the level of that now seen in private practice, and of the latter, again, I have no doubt, to a corresponding extent.

I hold it to be the duty of the community to itself—in what form it provides the requisite money is immaterial, and the difficulty of this particular question is a contemptible excuse for inaction—to hold out by its public hospitals to all poor and common syphilitics the same facilities for being cured as the rich and genteel derive from their money and the skill of private practitioners. Both classes are equally dangerous to society, in the first stages of the disease; equally dangerous in the aggravated and neglected ones. It may be relied upon that the propagation of syphilis affords no more personal gratification to the degraded pauper-harlot than to the man of means and position. The one extensively commits the crime against society because it is inseparable from her only alternative against starvation; the other seldom (I wish, for the honour of our sex, I could say never) knowingly, because it is not only

cruel and disgusting, but often physically painful, and always unnecessary to his existence. If we may not, under our present or any probable law, punish her for the crime, let us at least be wise enough, for the sake of society, to alter the circumstances which now almost drive her to its commission.

Admitting even that the means of granting in-door relief now at the disposal of the existing hospitals remained unamplified, I incline, on reflection, to the belief, and I would call the attention of the hospital surgeon of London to the fact, that the reverse of the present system of selection would (as far as concerns syphilitic patients) be attended with advantage to the public health, and to that of the majority of diseased prostitutes, without aggravating the sufferings of the remainder.

Were the slighter, because more recent, cases taken in hand as soon as presented, and the patients separated from the world, fed, lodged, and nursed until cured, it must be plain that infinitely more of them would be disposed of during twelve months, and a far less number of propagations be traceable to them, and the latter would, in their turn, be far less malignant. The broad sowing of syphilis, it must be kept in mind, is not so much due to the fearfully bad or complicated cases, which, besides generally betraying themselves, render fornication itself burdensome, as it is, among the higher order of prostitutes, to the inchoate or smouldering forms often unrecognised by the female herself, and, among the lower order, to the out-patient candidates for beds, who *must and will* live somehow and somewhere, and to the greater or less damage of the commonwealth, according to the state of their particular cases. While a bed in the syphilitic ward of an hospital is occupied, for say six weeks, by one case of secondary or tertiary symptoms, the department might have nipped in the bud by active treatment three cases of syphilis primitiva, or gonorrhœa. The former, had it been kept as an out-patient, would have withdrawn to its garret, or its cellar, or its dark arch, and amended by degrees on its straw pallet or bundle of rags, under the care of some dispensary or parish medical officer. It could not have wandered a-field for prey, and none of its fellows would have sought it from predilection. Its power of propagation would have been very limited indeed.

But neither of the three affected women who, by its admission into the hospital, are kept upon the out-patients' list, are precluded from the practice of their avocation. They continue it, on the contrary, as a general rule, and therefore oscillate for months between progress and relapses, until patched up cures are perhaps in two or three months accomplished, or steadily get worse and worse, until absolute laying up becomes indispensable, and admission into the house a mere matter of seniority. Each of these three women being then, so long as she is a-foot, a disease distributor, effective according to her unconsumed energy, it is a simple question, how much more the world would have benefited by their early recognition, and thereafter immediate separation and treatment in-doors, than by the devotion of a precious bed for an indefinite period to one particularly malignant and interesting case?

For the reader's convenience I have computed a *précis* of the preceding returns, showing the accommodation appropriated to venereal in-patients at the various hospitals of London; of the number of cases treated in

1856; and, as well as this can be procured, of the extent of out-patient relief.

Hospitals.	Total of Venereal Beds.	Beds devoted to Females.	Females treated.	Beds devoted to Males.	Males treated.	Total treated.	Venereal Out-patients.
Lock (special) . .	53	33	235	20	210	445	2170
St. Mary's . . .	None	...	None	...	None	None	...
University . . .	None	...	None	...	A few	A few	...
King's College . .	6	6	No return kept	...	No return kept	No return kept	6000 (an approximation).
Charing Cross . .	None	...	ditto	...	ditto	ditto	...
St. George's . . .	None	...	ditto	...	ditto	ditto	...
Royal Free . . .	26	26	...	None	...	...	...
Middlesex . . .	16	8	65	8	74	...	465
London	None	...	No return kept	...	No return kept	No return kept	Not reported.
Guy's	54	30	285	24	241	526	12,500 (an approximation).
St. Thomas's . .	61	25	165	36	245	410	{ Not reported, but 1 in 2 of all surgical out-patients.
St. Bartholomew's	81	56	416	25	240	656	
							12,600 (an approximation).
Total . . .	297	184		113			

I believe that the reader who has perused the foregoing pages will now, for the first time, be enabled roughly to estimate the number of venereal cases, as well as the hospital relief open to them, in London. There are few non-professional persons who will not be horrified at the enormous extent to which these ailments invalidate our population; and this sentiment will not be diminished by my stating that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of out-patient cases which must have been treated at the London Hospital, find no place in the above table, and adding my impression (although the very meagre nature of the returns hardly perhaps justifies me in stating this of any particular institution) that the average stay in hospital of each patient suffering under primary syphilis is not often less than one month, and of each affected with secondary symptoms not less than six weeks. Sir John Pitcairne informed the Committee of the House of Commons upon the Hospitals of Dublin, that the average duration of primary cases among the soldiery was from three to six weeks. I think that, considering the facilities the system of inspection offers for early detection of the disorder, and hospital discipline for its cure, the army cases, if proper facilities were afforded for *washing*, or at least the majority of them, should be cured in the shorter time. I have been told, however, by a trustworthy non-commissioned officer, who not long since came under my care, that the number of men who at present have one washing apparatus in common for their hands and faces would not permit its use by one of their number for the lower parts of his person. This is not to be wondered at, but it strikes me, if the general statement be true that no special conveniences of the kind are provided, that the sooner a change takes place the better.

While I put on record my obligations to those of my professional brethren who have been so kind as to respond to my request for these returns, I cannot help expressing my regret at the very limited acquaint-

tance with the importance of medical statistics which would appear to prevail among governors of hospitals and others concerned in their administration. Thus the medical officers—whose legitimate duties can hardly be said to include the compilation of statistics, however favourably they may look upon such inquiries—are precluded from all chance of accurately investigating either the spread or the decrease of disease.

It is well known that some of the above institutions having been founded only by great exertions, are still incomplete or financially embarrassed. It is as well known that the richer ones work to their full power. No reproach can attach, then, to the managers of this or that hospital, that it has no venereal ward, or that it appropriates too few beds to the complaints. I have no doubt that surgeons would be willing enough to undertake the additional charge, if only for the sake of enlarging the opportunities of study they might offer to their respective pupils; but I can perfectly understand that where the space and revenues of an institution are alike restricted, it would be most inconvenient to appropriate a distinct department to cases which, in the first place, cannot be placed in the ordinary wards; which, secondly, if so urgent as to be dangerous, would occupy beds so long as to impair the general utility of an establishment; and the propriety of whose reception, lastly, might be a subject of question among the voluntary subscribers. I have already attempted to show that out-door treatment of women for primary syphilis and gonorrhœa is a partial mistake, and that much money so spent is positively wasted; and I am disposed to think, therefore, that financially weak institutions do well in not attempting professedly, what to be of much service to the community must be done wholesale.

It appears that London, with her population of two millions and a half, and her 350,000 unmarried women above fifteen years of age, has hospital accommodation for 184 venereal females. By applying the rule of simple proportion to the population and venereal totals of some other places, I arrive at the following tabular view of our own shortcomings:

City.	Population.	Number of Beds for Females.	Population of London.	Proportional number of beds there should be in London.
Berlin	400,000	120	2,500,000	750
Brussels (exclusive of suburbs)	170,000	30		441
Hamburg	200,000	120		1500
Paris	1,500,000	470		783
Vienna	420,000	150		892

Supposing, therefore (to allow for short returns), that 200 beds are constantly appropriated to *female* venereal patients in London, our shortcoming, as compared with

Berlin, is	750	— 200 =	550
Brussels	441	— 200 =	241
Hamburg	1500	— 200 =	1300
Paris	783	— 200 =	583
Vienna	892	— 200 =	692

Leaving the above table, for which I claim no more credit than may be due to a very careful study of the limited materials accessible, and an approximate calculation based thereon, to the reader's favourable consideration, I will now offer a few remarks on some features of the treatment pursued towards venereal patients in this country.

It would, as I have before hinted, be superfluous were I to sound the praises of the zeal and skill brought to bear by our hospital officers. I should be attempting to gild fine gold were I to admire the vast benevolent liberality of individuals, which enables hundreds of thousands annually to obtain general medical and surgical relief. But this zeal, skill, and liberality being admitted, and so well known, the succeeding observations may be set down by some persons to a captious spirit on my part, and an affectation of unnecessary delicacy. This, however, would be incorrect. I am certainly about to recommend more delicacy, and that towards prostitutes—often very common and very low prostitutes; but my principal object being to show the necessity of Government action against venereal diseases, my second, the amelioration, as well of the moral as of the physical condition of the class just mentioned, I feel sure the public will agree with me, that if this greater delicacy would tend to keep full the hospitals which I argue the State should build and maintain, and to soften the hearts of their unhappy inmates, it could by no means be superfluous.

I object *in toto* to the name of *foul* wards, now bestowed upon those consecrated to venereal patients. I look on it as a remnant of the ancient *régime* for sick prostitutes, of which flagellation, hair-cutting, and head-shaving were features, and as one of those painful stings which makes the receipt of charity a martyrdom. I have mentioned my friend M. Ricord's opinion, with regard to the Parisian venereal treatment, that one of the best modes of still further advancing the interest of the public health would be to allow diseased women to enter hospitals without publishing the nature of their affliction, which is inevitable now that Lourcine is the only one open to the unregistered. I think, that the disgusting term "foul ward" in use among ourselves, pregnant as it is with disgrace, but which it were romantic folly to imagine could check vicious tendencies outside the hospital, prevents many a woman in the early stages of these diseases from seeking surgical relief, and induces her either to try her fortune with the charlatan or to neglect herself entirely.

The manner in which the clinical examination of venereal patients is conducted should, I think, be the subject of revision, and be assimilated to that in practice at the Lourcine in Paris. A separate room should be set apart, or at the least a screen set up at the end of the ward, behind which the proper inspection should take place by the surgeon, his regular staff of assistants, and a limited number of pupils. It is well known that clinical examination is now conducted in public, before a large class, which is shocking to that certain degree of modesty which, whatever may be thought to the contrary, is left to all but the most heartless and hardened of the sex. My next recommendation may possibly to some seem inconsistent with the delicacy I advocate; but, although strong professional conservatives have raised objections, on the ground of indelicacy, to the instrument, these are, it is now pretty well known

both to medical men and to the public, not to apply to its use by able hands, and certainly not to outweigh its enormous value. Every venereal prostitute should be examined with the speculum for her own sake and that of her medical attendant. To attempt her cure without it is to waste the time of both parties.

Venereal Wards should not be too public.—That it is desirable for a class of pupils to witness all the forms of venereal disease met with among prostitutes, admits of no doubt; I need not say how especially necessary it is that those who indulge the hope of becoming attached to hospitals and prisons, as well as those who aspire to military, naval, or poor-law appointments, should be well acquainted with them. But I really do not think it desirable that the wards wherein a number of diseased unfortunates are confined should be open, as now, to all pupils alike. In lunatic hospitals, selected pupils are alone allowed to enter the wards, and precautions are taken that this privilege should not be abused, as the wards should only be open to these students during the visit of the medical man, who gives lectures on the most interesting forms of disease.

In Paris the wards of the female venereal hospitals are so sealed to impertinent curiosity, that a pupil desirous of studying these diseases must become attached to the house in the capacity of *externe*, by special permission of the General Hospital Board, and on the recommendation of the surgeon. He gives his services, whatever they may be worth, in consideration of a daily mess and a stipend of eight francs a month, and has, no doubt, great opportunities of study. No more than an extremely limited number of men, therefore, is seen at any time about the wards of the Lourcine Hospital; and as these invariably exhibit the greatest delicacy and politeness towards the unfortunate inmates, such satisfactory relations are maintained between the patient and the doctor as make the word hospital far less a word of horror to Frenchwomen than to those of the class in this country.

If no other change is practicable in the system of managing our venereal wards, I might at least suggest that the large parties who frequent them should be allowed to witness the treatment of a selected number of cases only. The inspection of a number of women whose cases present no marked features of interest, can be fraught with no advantage to science, and is painful and demoralizing to the unhappy patients.

Classification of Female Patients.—We might, I think, take with advantage another hint from our neighbours, by dividing the women who apply for the cure of venereal complaints into the following classes:—

1. The married, who, guiltless themselves, have been injured by their husbands. These are annually becoming more numerous in the London hospitals, and no less than thirty-four of them were admitted into the Dublin Lock Hospital in the year 1854. To class them with the hardened offenders is a scandal to decency and morality,—a cruelty to them if they submit to it, or has the effect of keeping them out of hospital if they will not.

2. Girls who have been recently seduced and defiled,—for their reformation is not hopeless, but often accomplished where proper classification takes place, as in the Lourcine, but is next to impossible if they are

placed among the thoroughly vicious, who are too apt to pass their time in hospitals, even when strictly watched, in obliterating all trace of modesty from their less practised fellow-sufferers.

3. Prostitutes with children—for the child is a certain link between the mother and morality, during the existence of which her case is never hopeless; and charity, placing youth by the side of corruption, has much to answer for.

4. The childless, barren, and confirmed prostitutes.

Of State Interference with the Venereal Disease.—I am quite aware that to speak of such a classification of the very few patients received at some of our hospitals may be called absurd, and that a proposition so to arrange even the number present at any time in the larger ones would be met, and reasonably enough, by objections on the score of cost. The present structures, were the governors to make up their minds to a classification, would require expensive alteration. The subdivision of a ward would entail certain extra attendance at an expense also. A space so dealt with might perhaps be less airy than when undivided. Hospitals, unsupported as they are by public grants, have already enough to do to make both ends meet. They, as it were, live up to their incomes, and have no surplus, after doing all they can for the public health, to spend in fanciful provisions for public morality. All this I should be prepared to hear, and I am ready to admit, again and again, that as much is done, and is as well done, too, for venereal cases, as we have any right to expect of the existing bodies. I hasten, in fact, to make this admission, due alike to the medical service of all hospitals, and to their voluntary subscribers. The sooner it is made, the sooner is the ground clear for progress.

The careful reader of the foregoing pages will have seen that the virtual exclusion of venereal patients from some of our large hospitals has thrown them back upon others, who are thus unduly taxed. He will have observed that nearly one-half of the surgical out-patients of St. Bartholomew's, St. Thomas's, and Guy's, and nearly all those of the Royal Free Hospital, are so afflicted, and that the selection imposed upon those institutions renders vain all hope of their establishing such command over the disease as the acknowledged advance of science, assisted by adequate funds, might, in the absence of such necessity, have secured. He will next have to form his own opinion, taking into consideration what he has read in this and previous chapters, whether or not the eradication or diminution of syphilis is a question of national importance, and how far any special ban of Providence has been placed upon man's small exertions in that direction. Then, if, after considering whether prostitution, the prime cause of syphilis, is rife, and what extent of suppression or repression the English Government or English society can apply to it, it should appear to him that when that power over the prime cause shall have been exhausted, a flood of the evil effect will still have to be dealt with, and may be righteously dealt with, he will, I think, admit the duty of good citizens to organize a powerful opposition to it.

I can quite believe that, until recently, few members of the Legislature could have been found to support, much less to propose to Ministers, a Parliamentary vote in aid of London venereal hospitals. But I

am inclined to believe that in the present Parliament there are men who, once convinced, have independence and sufficient moral courage to do either the one or the other; and I believe, again, that the man of any ability who would couch some such views as these in Parliamentary phraseology before the House of Commons, would neither want many nor attentive hearers.

Although successive Governments have deliberated, through fear of going too far—and perhaps, after all, wisely—before subjecting prostitution to public police interference, or even sanitary regulation, they have somewhat furtively procured an annual recognition of the public duty to lessen its evils, by bringing forward the Dublin Lock Hospital Grant of 2813*l.*, until the Scotch purists and the Lambeth economists were strong enough, first to reduce it in 1838 to 1750*l.*, and then in 1854 to overthrow it altogether. But a Committee of the House of Commons in 1857 succeeded, in spite of even Ministerial opposition, in restoring the vote to its place on the list. This was no packed tribunal, as may be imagined from its being opposed to the opinions of Mr. Wilson, and from its approval of an annual grant for Irish benefit, although composed of eleven English and only five Irish members. But the evidence brought before it showed so clearly that the time of soldiers, which had been purchased by the public, was wasted by syphilis, that the Dublin garrison, like all others, was a scourge not merely to prostitutes, but to married women, and that only 1*l.* had been voluntarily subscribed there for the purpose during thirty-four years, that the Committee had no alternative, as Christians and good citizens, but to report as follows:—

“That the importance of such an institution (a Lock Hospital) in a town like Dublin, can hardly be over-rated. It appears that in large garrison towns the establishment of a lock hospital for females is the best mode of preventing venereal disease among the soldiery.

“On the mere grounds of economy, its support by Parliament can be justified, as venereal disease constantly incapacitates and even causes the discharge of the soldier at the very age that is most serviceable to the country.”

A considerable show of opposition was made to the vote proposed for the institution in pursuance of the above report, on the evening of the 13th July, 1857; but I am happy to say this was ultimately withdrawn, and the unfortunate syphilitic cases of Dublin are again recognised by the State. How much good the authorities of the Westmoreland Lock Hospital can effect with a small sum of money is shown by the fact that the average cost to the charity of each female patient is 3*l.*, and the number admitted in 1853 was 575; in 1856, 418.

Now, seeing that a Committee of the House of Commons have reported as above, and their report has been endorsed and legislated on by Parliament, and seeing again that venereal branches have been appended by the Government authorities to their hospitals at Portsmouth,*

* Sir John Liddell has kindly furnished me with the following particulars relative to the Government grant alluded to in the Committee of the House of Commons on the Dublin hospitals:—

“*Admiralty, 17th Augus', 1857.*

“Dear Sir,—In reply to your note of yesterday, I have to inform you that Lock wards for twenty beds have been founded and maintained by the Navy, in connexion with the

with the view of repairing as much as possible the damage resulting to the public health from the presence of large bodies of soldiers and sailors, it is clear that the very indispensable necessary, "a precedent," is not wanting for Government action. I therefore ask that our own City, London, should be put upon the footing of the more favoured City of Dublin, and the still more favoured capitals of foreign countries.

It is vain to say that she is rich enough to help herself, for though her inhabitants might at the bidding of enterprise build another Crystal Palace, or construct a second Great Western Railway, the same fear of assisting the vicious while doing public good, the same old convenient excuse, that what is every one's business is no one's business, will be ever found in London, as in Dublin, to hinder the establishment of public venereal hospitals by private subscriptions; and the best reason of all against their foundation by private generosity is, in my opinion, the fact that this foundation is the affair of the public. To the public purse alone do I look for it.

Supposing that for a time—neglecting gonorrhœa and secondary symptoms—the operations of the national hospitals were to be confined to primary syphilis, in the suppression of which, as I have said elsewhere, the race of the people has the greater interest; I believe the least extent of accommodation we ought to provide should be 300 beds for females, and 200 for males, which would place it in the power of all existing institutions either to maintain their present venereal wards for the purposes of their respective medical schools, or conscientiously to abandon the reception of such cases, and appropriate the valuable space to other complaints. These establishments would in any case be invaluable as district dispensaries for out-patient treatment, under a system I am about to hint at, could this be made compatible with their proper dignity and position, and that of their several staffs; and they would, in the event of their retaining their in-patient wards, no doubt retain their pre-eminence as places for the study of peculiar forms of disease.

I believe that a female venereal hospital of 300 beds for primary cases in this metropolis would, were proper machinery set to work for the reception of patients in the early stages of the disease, turn out 3000 cases annually (and that the discoverers of these 3000 cases would find another thousand who would be treated at home), and that the sum of 9000*l.* per annum would be required for its maintenance. I am not in a position to furnish a closer estimate, either for building or annual expenses, but I apprehend that the figure I have named may be rather excessive than otherwise. If such is the case, it is clear that out of a parliamentary vote of 30,000*l.* per annum, the metropolis might maintain the 1000 beds for syphilitics which would nearly put her in the

Portsmouth, Portsea, and Gosport Hospital, which are always kept full, and are acting most beneficially. A sum of 1800*l.* was voted by Parliament for the erection of these wards, and 500*l.* is granted yearly in the Navy Estimates for their support.

"An attempt has been made to establish a similar institution at Plymouth and Devonport, where there is no sanitary provision whatever for the prevention or early arrest of the disease amongst the unfortunate women; but the authorities of these towns will not sanction any provision being made for the admission into their hospitals, workhouses, or dispensaries, of diseases that are contracted by immorality, and the thing is therefore for the present in abeyance.

"W. Acton, Esq."

"Yours truly,

"J. LIDDELL.

same position with regard to the disorder as some foreign cities. Another 10,000*l.* well spent in out-patient treatment of secondary symptoms and gonorrhœa by the hospital staff and numerous local dispensaries would complete the work.

The right of entry, not at present enjoyed by the police, except in the case of common lodging-houses, is vested, nevertheless, under the Public Health Acts, in certain medical officers, who have access to every house in their respective districts. I see no impossibility of applying machinery of this sort to the further benefit of the prostitute and the community, by the detection of venereal disease. I should be among the first to protest against compulsory health inspection of the person, which, unless by speculum, cannot be performed efficaciously. I believe, however, that were the repression of syphilis but to be taken, as it should be, under the care of the State, as a parental measure, the officer of health, whom I hope to see year after year more recognised as a public necessity and a public friend, would be the most natural and efficient agent for peopling the national hospitals.

The confidence of all classes, and particularly of the poor and the vicious, though rarely given till too late to the emissary of the Cross, is more often volunteered than not to the medical man. I believe that were district sub-inspectors appointed under the Health Acts, not from among strangers, but from the resident members of our profession—who have ready access to the homes, and often enough, as I have said, to all the private affairs, of those among whom they cast their lot—and were this staff adequately remunerated for the use of their time and trouble about a public matter, cases of syphilis would, after a little practice, be speedily discovered and put under treatment, and the disease itself, in process of time, if not absolutely eradicated, be reduced to a trifling minimum.

Their strict duty should of course be limited to the enforcement of ordinary public health regulations, which are now systematically neglected in such haunts and homes. But in addition to this function, the district health officer, who must be undoubtedly a person of manners and tact, should be charged with the diffusion of information upon the value of decency and private sanitary precautions. He would find abundant opportunities of inculcating personal cleanliness, the importance and means of self-defence against venereal disease, the steps to be taken in the case (which the unfortunate always believes improbable) of her contracting it, and the immense advantage of immediate action. He should, in fact, forewarn and forearm, thus paving the way for whoever may be charged with the case when disease at length appears.

Though the prostitute in health rarely turns her thoughts to her own sickness, it is far otherwise with the lodging-house keeper, who quakes at the idea of an epidemic in her neighbourhood, or on the outbreak of venereal disease in her establishment. She may flout and she may swear at the daily additions to the floating debt of her invalid inmate; but when, reckless of the public health, she urges the unfortunate to the streets, she but hastens the inevitable crisis of the hospital or the sick room, and defers her own chances of being paid. If she drive her lodger out of doors she virtually abandons her claims; and if she allow

her to remain an inmate she retains an unprofitable and troublesome incumbrance. From her unsleeping cupidity, then, when once the object of the health officer was recognised, I should calculate on a degree of welcome and assistance which the professional or voluntary emissaries of religion may never look for.

I should apprehend no discontent and no opposition from the members of my profession. Even were the advancement of the public health to demand some sacrifices of them, I have reason to think those sacrifices would be patiently, if not cheerfully borne. But the preceding proposition tends, I fancy, rather to better the position of district practitioners than otherwise. A man of skill and acquirements, who has established himself in any dense metropolitan neighbourhood, is, as things now stand, beset by venereal patients. Instead of being pursuer, he is in this aspect the pursued. He must either in self-defence briefly steel his breast against appeals for gratuitous treatment and credit, or his time and his surgery are heavily taxed by the former, and of such as become his debtors, perhaps only one in four can meet him on the day of payment.

But were my voice listened to, the establishments of such men would become divisional surgeries, or dispensaries, the surgeon himself being paid for his inspection services, either by salary, or head money on cases remitted by him to central hospitals. Certain cases, not demanding hospital care, he should be charged with, under direction of a proper central hospital board, and paid for. He would obviously retain the power of treating all whose circumstances might enable them both to keep out of hospital and to pay. An end would thus be put to the gratuitous treatment of syphilitic cases, as those who being too poor to pay, yet too proud or impatient of restraint to accept of public dispensary or hospital treatment, have surely no claim upon the heavily taxed sympathies of our profession. The class who absolutely would not, when they might, be gratuitously treated for venereal disorders, must, owing to the manifold inconveniences of the disease, and the fair average diffusion of common sense among English people, be so restricted that provisions in their regard, whether for compulsion or punishment, would be superfluous. The "Act for the Prevention and Mitigation of certain Contagious Disorders"—an act of mercy indeed, which I hope before I die will set another jewel in the crown of a virtuous Queen—should impose penalties upon the fraudulent dealings, by irregular practitioners, with the public health, and make the communication of syphilis to minors a felony.

Although I have long had the intention of laying these views before the public, I must admit, after seeing them in manuscript, that they have pretensions to little more than the germs of what is called "the practical." To have presented them in a mature form would have involved, among other things, the elaboration of an hospital scheme—a task to which many of my readers must be more competent than myself. I may on the one hand have overrated the power of the sum I have named, and on the other I may possibly—though I have little apprehension on this head—have miscalculated the degree of countenance which the scheme of a public anti-syphilis organization would receive from the profession. Any accurate estimate of the cost of such a measure

would have demanded the administrative capacity of Mr. Steele, of Guy's Hospital, and a devotion of time not at my disposal. To have tested at all satisfactorily the opinions of the medical body, or to have attempted to move it by the agency of our corporate institutions, would have required the heads of Cerberus, and the hands of Briareus.

Being not thus endowed, and yet desirous to avail myself of what seemed a highly favourable condition of the public mind, I have been obliged to throw out the foregoing suggestions in a crude state. As regards the public, I believe they will yet amply serve to catch opinions. Had they been the labour of a lifetime, they would still have fallen short in point of mechanism, and been open to manifold suggestions of improvement by professional judges. To the public and the profession, therefore, I commit them, deprecating condemnation on account of an immaturity which I confess, and leaving, it must be observed, a wider field for the ingenuity of others than had I taken time to clothe the bare skeleton of a plan with laborious, and at present unnecessary detail. For the time, it is enough that the principle of public opposition to venereal disease in London should be brought forward and considered from the moral, sanitary, and constitutional points of view. I have endeavoured to throw some light upon it by adducing the best (though unfortunately meagre) evidence procurable; and should it ever, surviving the various preliminary ordeals, make its appearance on the refining hearth of a Parliamentary Committee, then will arise the important question of a detailed scheme, and the much more knotty one of ways and means. Could I as clearly see a way through the latter as through the former of these difficulties, my mind would be easy indeed. I fully anticipate the progress, sure though slow, of the subject as far as that troublesome siding of pounds, shillings, and pence on which so many a proper measure has been shunted for ever; and I can imagine that such a vote as I have proposed, were it even backed by a Blue-book full of convincing evidence, and a report from the most conscientious Committee that ever sat, would be just such a "tub to a whale" as an anxious Treasury Bench might be expected to throw overboard to pacify a sharp Parliamentary inquirer. But the most economical of minds cannot for ever be dead to the calls of patriotism and charity; and should the urgent and especial interest of our urban communities, in showing a bold front to these diseases, ever break upon men in office, I am not without hope that the representatives of those communities at least, among whom, I believe, are the leading apostles of thrift, will find it their duty also to support Bills, votes, or resolutions tending to that end. The question then remaining—and it would be a natural and proper one for debate—would be upon whose financial shoulders ought the burden to be imposed—whether on those of municipalities or on those of the country at large.

VISITATION AND RELIEF FUND, SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION;
OR, THE LAST ALTERNATIVE—A SELF-SUPPORTING SANITARY SOCIETY,
AIDED BY VOLUNTARY SUBSCRIPTIONS.

I took occasion, twelve months ago, when my ideas upon this subject were perhaps hardly so matured as at present, to submit them to some parochial authorities, illustrating by such arguments as I thought they might appreciate, the value of prophylactic measures against venereal as well as against other diseases. My so-styled "preposterous idea," that the over-taxed ratepayers—many of them hardly able to support themselves—should be called upon actually to search out and then maintain in idleness a parcel of invalid harlots, thus qualifying them for fresh campaigns against the public, was duly sifted over and ridiculed, and its unlucky author was dismissed to keep the appropriate company of other visionaries. I had clearly made one mistake; but with scarce-abated hope, and sure, at least, of being better understood, I waited upon the accomplished medical officer of the General Board of Health, and laid before him a somewhat lengthy epitome of my views upon prostitution and venereal disease. I pointed out that our enemy, unlike cholera, is always with us, operating on the happiness and the physical condition—sometimes from generation to generation—of the community. I showed in how much greater proportion the public health suffers from this than from other disorders, and how our knowledge of its laws might enable us, first to arrest, and then to gain ground against it. Having raised and, I believe, disposed of, the moral and religious fallacy, I hinted that, unless through Government indiscretion, no greater political danger attended a change in our tactics than had been involved in the laws upon vaccination and quarantine; and I ventured to undertake that the medical profession, with proper State support, would devise and put in action measures adequate, not to the extirpation of syphilis, but at least to its thorough subjugation. Were large temporary accommodation provided in addition to that at the disposal of existing hospitals, and the system of detection and early treatment once in broad operation, I thought that the victory would soon be so far achieved, that only sporadic cases would remain. Touching upon the public loss by non-effective males—whether of the labouring classes or in the public service—I called attention to the prevalent misapprehension as to the fate of prostitutes, and the possibility that the Government of this country gravely erred in practically endorsing by inaction the vulgar notion that the woman once a prostitute always remains such, and that the community can have no concern in her welfare after her fall.

I acknowledge with pleasure that my statements were heard with patient and considerate attention; but there, alas! ended, or nearly so, for the time, my communication with the executive upon this matter. For "had I not," I was asked, "omitted to count the cost of all this? Was I not aware that Government had no means at its disposal for such a purpose, and that the unauthorized appropriation to it of funds otherwise destined, was out of the question. Were not the House of Commons entrusted with the national purse-strings, and did they not jealously guard this cherished function? Could I, in fine, for one

moment, in my simplicity, imagine that any member of Government, or indeed any member of the House of Commons, could be found so bold as to propose from his place in that House a grant of money with such an object, however assured he might be of its propriety and public importance?"

Forgetful at the time of the annual vote for the Dublin Lock Hospital, I was unable to parry with it this *ultima ratio* of my well-disposed official friend. He, however, recommended — if my convictions and energy were still unimpaired — that I should endeavour to organize a system of visitation on the voluntary principle, and in the metropolis. If subsequently, supported by facts and evidence of success, even upon a small scale, I chose again to try my fortunes at Whitehall, I might indulge, he thought, some hope of the possible eventual countenance of Government. When, with this lengthy vista of probabilities before me — great though the object at its close — I weighed the very partial results to be expected, and the difficulty of so propagating my views as to raise even a limited private fund, to say nothing of personal convenience and professional avocations, I must confess that, although my convictions did remain unimpaired, I lost the intensity of purpose demanded by an enterprize so new and so peculiar.

While brooding over the necessity of State intervention, and accumulating materials for this present plea in its favour, my thoughts would frequently recur to Mr. Simon's suggestion, that as far as visitation went, my scheme should be carried out by private exertion; and while preparing for the press, I resolved once more to make an attempt. The old obstacles encumbered the ground, and new ones came up thick and fast, even when, abandoning the notion of general operations, I had selected for a beginning the obviously ample field presented by the concentrated prostitution in my own immediate neighbourhood. Not the least of these would be that combination of moral cowardice and dishonesty not peculiar to prostitutes, and often falsely called "independence of spirit," or even "high-mindedness," which prefers contraction of debt without reasonable prospect of payment, to being apparently an object of charity, or as it is at other times expressed, "being under obligations." Ignorance, thoughtlessness, and insincerity, again, might lead to much involuntary as well as purposed deception of visitors, even after first prejudices against what might be thought impertinent curiosity had been smoothed down. The probable apprehensions of the class that gratuitous sanitary visitation must of necessity be a cloak for some religious or police contrivance, would have to be overcome: and on my part, there was the fear that the practitioners of the district might conceive themselves professionally slighted — not to say unhand somely interfered with — were strange emissaries of a medical charity to be introduced into the neighbourhood without reference to their interests or opinions. Lastly, when I thought over the reluctance of some and the religious scruples of other most worthy and charitable men as to coming forward to patronize and conduct such an institution, and the alacrity with which others not so eligible would certainly embrace the opportunity of indulging idle curiosity, I felt compelled once more, not to abandon my project, but to re-arrange it. Taking counsel with some friends of mine, we decided that as this

scheme was of professional origin, so by professional agency and under professional management alone could we hope to mature it. It was by no means certain that if the profession took the matter in hand, a larger subscription-list could not be raised for the peculiar object than would be forthcoming in answer to the appeal of a few charitable laymen. This much was certain: it would not be less. It was clear that none would require so little indoctrination upon the subject as men of our calling; none would be so alive to the extent of the evil and the importance of a remedy; and therefore few, if our hearts were in it, would plead better than we should. Again, if the State demanded proofs of sanitary truths, no laymen so fit as we to furnish them. If she could be spurred to do her duty by the shown experience of an ordinary association of voluntary subscribers, how much more effective would be that of a medical charity supported by medical men? Who so trustworthy as investigators? who so likely as them to be listened to by the particular class in question, whether as advocates of health, precautions, or of worldly prudence? Who, last of all, would be so competent as ourselves to solve that standing problem to all charities—namely, how to do the most good with the least money?

I therefore found myself at this conclusion:—that the new sanitary movement must, to have a chance of success, be under the direction, or at least the sponsorship, of medical men. The question of ways and means next presented itself. The accounts of the Lock Hospital would seem to hold out small encouragement to hope for great immediate public sympathy. On the other hand, the managers of that charity are hampered in their exertions by a clog of delicacy which would not neutralize the zeal of professional men bent upon the new experiment. But still, when I remembered the reluctance of the best among us to contribute to untried plans, the difficulty, indeed the questionable propriety, of ventilating this one by the usual agencies of public meetings, circulars, and advertisements, I was again brought to a stand-still. Returning again to the charge, I weighed the rooted aversion to hospital treatment entertained by the particular section of women with whom it was proposed to begin, and the consequent distrust with which they would regard eleemosynary visitation; and asked myself, was there any paramount necessity for beginning in that quarter at all? The answer was affirmative; for I found that, with all their braveries, the West-End prostitutes bear no amulet against disease. As susceptible of, and, from their promiscuity, if anything, more liable to syphilis than the lowest strumpet, these women are, for the same reason perhaps, more diffusive of it than she is; and their bad physical condition materially concerns classes of males whose soundness is no less important to society than that of the soldiers or artisans infected by the prostitutes of Westminster and Lambeth. As, therefore, I could have gained nothing but new difficulties by changing the venue, I decided on promulgating the following scheme for the sanitary regulation of the West-End prostitutes, which is calculated, I believe, to meet the various difficulties hereinbefore raised, and is susceptible of modified adaptation to other districts.

I propose to extend to the woman of the town the advantages of a Friendly Society, or Benefit Club, so that, when suffering from any

affection whatsoever, incidental or not incidental to her vocation, she may, in virtue and right of her own payments during health,* ensure the attendance and remuneration of any qualified practitioner resident in the district, whom she might select, as well as an allowance while under treatment.

The general and financial management of the Institution, which I propose to call the London Female Sanitary Society, I would vest in a sufficiently numerous council of lay and professional persons of good repute. The medical supervision ought, for obvious reasons, to rest with a distinct committee of medical men, and no others. Ample machinery for the detection and cure of venereal disease already exists, in the shape of the resident practitioners, and only requires organization to fit it for our purpose. The assistance of these gentlemen is indispensable. I have already shown, in treating of Government intervention, their peculiar fitness for the work, and the probability of their zealous co-operation with the State; and, from inquiries I have made, I believe that the same zeal and acquirements would be cheerfully brought to the assistance of a sound and well-directed sanitary movement promoted by individuals.

The Society's income should be derived:—

1st. From members' entrance fees.

2nd. From their weekly payments.

3rd. From subscriptions and donations. These I think would be forthcoming, as well from the benevolent class of persons who support the bulk of our charitable institutions, as from a number of the public who have long compassionated fallen women, and from others again whose recollection of their own past sufferings may induce them to recognise the value, and deplore the former absence, of such an institution.

The sickness of prostitutes from all causes† averages about four weeks per annum. An allowance of 30s. per week for this period—and less would be insufficient for women treated at home—would amount to 6*l*. Payment for professional services *by the case* would be infinitely preferable to any other mode; and after conferring with gentlemen who have already considerable practice of the kind, I think that 2*l*. 10s. per case would cover the cost of medicine and attendance, and of the other services the Society would require of its representatives.

The weekly payment necessary to secure the annual demand upon the funds of 8*l*. 10s. (the sum of the above items) in respect of each member, would be three shillings and three pence.

If the surgical fee were reduced to 2*l*. per case, and the members' sick allowance to 1*l*. per week, a weekly contribution of two shillings

* I feel that this inviting women to subscribe is the weak point of the whole system—so much so that I have been over and over again on the point of giving up the notion. It must instinctively be repugnant to every well-regulated mind to be instrumental in collecting money that is the wages of sin—the reward of iniquity. Could I have devised any other plan, willingly would I have done so. If the State, as I believe is its duty, or the public, undertook the foundation and maintenance of special hospitals, these words need not have been written. But as such institutions do not seem forthcoming from either source, I am forced back upon this proposal of co-operation: and have silenced my own doubts by the argument, that the direction of the wages of sin towards the salvation of the sinner, is more than enough to sanctify their handling.

† Say from uterine, venereal, hysterical, and chest affections.

and sixpence would suffice. But as I contemplate imposing upon medical officers, in addition to attendance upon, and the supply of medicine to, the sick, the labour of syphilis discovery, distribution of sanitary rules, collection of returns, and correspondence with the Medical Committee, their remuneration should, I fancy, be something in excess of the cost price of their visits and drugs. I have therefore thought it best to assume that each medical man in union with the Institution will receive 2*l.* 10*s.* on each member's case.

It is not improbable that certain of these women would consider a sick allowance of 1*l.* 10*s.* per week a bagatelle, and would rather not subscribe than contemplate the possibility of what they would call such fearfully reduced circumstances. It would be imprudent, however, on the part of the management, unless there were more prospect than I can foresee of a numerous distinct class of heavy assurers, to run the hazard of impairing the soundness of the benefit fund by mixing exceptional risks with the general body.

Supposing the association to be well under weigh, it is obvious that a member should not be admitted unless she were apparently in a fair state of soundness *for a prostitute*; but I am not unprepared for abuses. It would be all but impossible in the early stages, whatever might be afterwards deemed expedient, to insist upon examination as a condition of admission. The chances are, indeed, that as we should be under the necessity of canvassing for members, the adoption of such a rule would render the scheme unpopular and its failure certain.

Hence the general funds would suffer. Women in a state of disease would pass a superficial examination undetected, join the society to be cured, and with characteristic improvidence, forthwith drop their payments. Impositions of this nature, to which all benefit clubs are more or less liable, would press unduly upon the benefit fund; but I have calculated upon the public subscriptions to compensate for them. And again, as it would be pointed out that they had a tendency to prejudice the interests of the beneficiary members, I should expect that the latter, like those of other societies, would after a time be anxious to detect and expose them, as they well might, for their own protection. But whether such attempts to take unfair advantage of the institution be so prevented or not, it must be borne in mind that, having on the one hand no views of profit and no payments after death to provide for, and on the other, having in prospect the contributions of the charitable public, it will not be vitally important to steer the course of stern economy that would dictate the inexorable rejection of invalid candidates by an ordinary friendly society. Our object is to employ medicine for the improvement not of public health alone, but also of public morals, and to that end it will be our bounden duty to open our doors to the sick and sorry as widely as common sense and honesty may permit—to invite the entrance unquestioned of all whom we may by any means secure the means to treat without misappropriating the sacred fund of the contributing members.

The reader will recollect, that when a contributory scheme was proposed, it was, through well-founded apprehension that the class might, in their foolish pride, as insolently reject the interference of charity as they do that of religion. We adopted it as a kind of *parvisé* behind which

we might win our way into their homes and confidence; but we can only hope for bald results if we allow ourselves to be unduly encumbered by it at the hill-foot of our enterprise, when the heaviest part of the work is before us, and our powers are undeveloped.

The whole success of the experiment is involved in the steady co-operation of the visiting officers. I have before explained that such a staff was ready to our hands, and how they may be considered as being even personally interested in the movement. I rely, however, upon other and higher inducements for their enlistment, for I consider that no man may have elected to pass his days in one of the crowded districts who is not, as it were, forced to sympathize with the miseries of his neighbours, more patent as they must be to his eyes than to those of the uninstructed. No man but would rejoice (considerations of profit apart) at the slightest modicum of assistance supplied by charity to his already over-taxed resources of gratuitous relief. By investing him moreover with the functions of the almoner, besides those of the physician, we should be adding unquestionably to his local influence and to his value to ourselves.

Such an emissary need never be accompanied on his rounds, as are his foreign prototypes, by a file of the police; his visits, on the contrary, would soon be recognised, not as impertinent, but as the mere performance of a covenant between the Society and its members. They would be rigorously exacted by the latter, and the advantage of his precautionary advice volunteered to all women in health, would soon come to be anxiously sought for. One of his most important doctrines in connexion with the Society would be the inculcation of prophylactics upon women in health, to whom, under the circumstances I have imagined, he would have easy access.

The carelessness and indolence that counteract in practice the theoretical acquaintance of even well-informed persons with the value of preventive measures, have ever been the powerful allies of contagion against the health of the regular prostitute. To substitute instruction for her ignorance, and self-respect for her recklessness, has been hitherto nobody's business, and has not been attempted. Bought, sold, and cheapened, like other articles of trade, often used by the brothel-keeper as it were a sponge, to collect loose money from our sex, and to be squeezed dry at leisure, the denizen of the brothel at least, whatever more elevated ideas may have found a place in the understanding of her independent sisters, has looked upon disease as a remote contingency—which good luck might defer for ever—unprofitable and unpleasant to contemplate beforehand. As reflection and economy, which strike at the root of brothel society, have ever been expelled from it as common enemies; so, I apprehend, are health precautions, savouring as they do of decency, foresight, and calculation, likely to be discouraged among these fatalists as unmeaning or futile. But a strong impression might be made upon this ignorance and fatalism if the surgeon, who is generally regarded among our lower classes much as the mysterious "medicine man" of yet wilder tribes, were to assume before them the mission of disease eradication with a faint show of that boldness which never fails to find believers and victims for the charlatan.

The visiting officer of the Society, upon his tour of sanitary propa-

gandism, should communicate to the members oral, and perhaps printed information upon the following heads:—

The value, proper times, and proper method of ablution should be first dwelt upon. Cold water is, I am aware, often used externally, but still not so commonly as might be wished. Few females apply it with regularity to the generative organs, and of these few again do so at proper seasons. Most scrupulous use of soap and water immediately after connexion should be insisted upon, and micturition at the same time, as tending to remove any irritating secretion that may have found its way to the urethra.

The female should be especially cautioned against too frequent sexual congress, whether in obedience to instincts of her own, or in compliance with male lasciviousness.

She should be made aware of the impropriety of connexion for at least two days before and after the periods of menstruation, as also during those periods.

She should be entreated to discard the notion that because, as a subscriber to a fund, she may procure relief, that fund can absolve her from the penalty imposed upon her general health for the abuse of a calling which is in its mildest form an abuse of Nature.

It should be impressed upon her that it is her almost inevitable fate, sooner or later, to undergo one of the uterine or venereal complaints, but that by her precaution, vigilance, and immediate correspondence with our profession, its severity and duration may be mitigated, while if neglected, it will prove serious, or at all events tedious. For their common benefit, prostitutes should be earnestly entreated to enforce upon each other the surgeon's serious advice, to avoid stimulating drinks and connexion while under treatment; and those in health should be cautioned against the use of water, sponges, or chamber utensils in common with the diseased, though they may inhabit the same rooms, sleep in the same bed, and perhaps drink out of the same cups.

They should be seriously shown the absurdity of nostrums, the dangers to health and purse that result from quackery in general. The daily use of an injection, composed of one ounce of solution of chlorinated soda to one pint of water, should be recommended, and be applied with a proper elastic syringe, the ordinary pewter ones being of little use. The solution should not be used before connexion, as its tendency is to remove a portion of the mucus that sheathes the membrane, and by its astringency to coagulate the remainder into an incrustation, whose abrasion during the act would leave the parts bare and more susceptible than before. The prostitutes of some foreign cities are by law compelled to keep some such preparation in their rooms, but I fancy the police of those capitals have stopped short of the absurdity of attempting to enforce its private use by stress of edicts.

She may, after a time, be delicately told, that one of the great advantages of interior examination is the early discovery of venereal sores or abrasions, which, if immediately treated, have no more than transiently unpleasant results.

And lastly, it should be impressed upon her, that there are persons in the world who are neither unconcerned for her present health, nor hopeless of her reclamation; that though she may have no definite

ideas of quitting her evil way, there are those who consider her continuance in it terminable, and who, believing that length of days and peace may be in store for her, hold out what glimmering light they may to help her, if ever so little, through the darkness in which she walks.

Each medical officer in union with the Society, and I presume that nearly all the qualified practitioners of the district would become so, would make a weekly report to the medical committee, of new and old cases under his charge. His duty would be to see sick members three times a-week, when and where might be settled between them; and for the statistical inquiry and sanitary propagandism, it were better that he should make his way into as many dwelling-houses as possible. In peculiar or difficult cases, the medical committee would be at his disposal for consultation, and in such as showed symptoms of becoming unduly burdensome upon the funds of the latter, would be bound to offer their assistance, and one of their number should be considered as disposable every week for this purpose. I have no doubt but that the expenses would for two years be heavy, and that the machinery altogether would be found to work somewhat inaccurately, but I think that after that interval, when the value of thriftiness and precaution had come home to the class, they would seek, instead of requiring to be sought by, our health officers. We should soon begin to collect those ample and reliable venereal statistics whose want I have so often had occasion to deplore during the composition of this and other works. These once obtained, we should find after another interval that we were shortening the mean duration of venereal sickness by means of early discovery and treatment, and this would be of course synonymous with reduced intensity of disease and diminished male and female suffering.

As, besides impoverishing the funds, it would exceed the legitimate aim of the Society to impose upon it the care of prolonged or incurable cases, it seems no more than right that its members, like those of other benefit clubs, should covenant with it for a material decrease of the sick allowance after a certain length of illness. The Society should, on its part, be bound to treat the patient either in cheap lodgings or in a proper infirmary. To enable it to carry out this agreement, I should rely upon the public subscription, not the contributors' fund, and I expect that the system would in a few years make such progress that severe and expensive cases of venereal disease, at least, would be rarely heard of.

The idea that such an institution would induce one woman more to enter upon sinfulness, will not for a moment bear the light of reason. It holds out no allurements of impunity; and providence was never an inducement to vice. I may say to the advocates of reformatories, and nothing but reformatories, that the primary object of this Club would not be reformation or proselytism: it would be Christian charity towards the fallen, and Christian charity is the handmaid of religion. You must soften the steel before you can mould it; you must get in somehow the thin end of the wedge of improvement. A member of such an institution, though she were casehardened as steel, must be something softened by the novel sense of disinterested sympathy in time of health, and consideration in the time of sickness and trouble. But we would have no direct hand in the conversion of the prodigal. We would leave that

to the Church, whose fitting office it is, contented with the reflection that we had been her harbingers and her pioneers, that we had opened a way to the heart and conscience, where she stood aghast at the work.

The fact that those who have the closest relations with the class with whom it is proposed to deal have direct pecuniary interest in the success of such an undertaking, would not slightly, I apprehend, enhance the probabilities in its favour. The lodging-house keeper, whose avarice, as a general rule, has devoured her other passions, and who now, as creditor for home and food, is less a ministering angel than a vexing demon at the bedside of sickness, must from mere self-interest become our propagandist, and thus retributively the most impure will aid us to uproot, or at the least to lop, the upas tree wherein they harbour.

Enough has been said to show why members of our profession throughout London, whose time is now distracted by attendance, nominally or virtually gratuitous, upon increasing numbers of patients whom they know to be proper objects of the public care, should be our natural advocates and our working staff. Our ideas have no tendency towards centralization, but rather to contending in detail, and by district organization of lay and professional efforts, against the formidable deteriorator of the human race. Fighting for the public health, we may, we earnestly believe, damage in our progress the outworks of immorality and vice, and establish a foothold for the emissary of the Cross where now he wears heart and eye in seeking one. Once on the march, we shall be slow but sure, and if we win but way enough to induce the State to do its office, our object will have been answered. The State has virtually refused to initiate the work of controlling syphilis, and has, in a manner, challenged individuals to the experiment. How that challenge might be taken up, it has been the object of the preceding pages, after years of anxious thought and rejected plans, to point out.

CHAPTER IX.

PREVENTION.

I HAVE now, as well as I could, fulfilled my promise of examining the probabilities of our applying some such influences to prostitution as might prepare the road for the escape of its victims, while lessening both its temporary and permanent ill effects upon them and upon public health, and, at the same time, correcting those excesses which offend delicacy. I will now glance at the prospects of prevention which, visionary or otherwise, deserve to be taken some account of.

To suppose an absence of the sexual ideas, which are instinctive in youth, and in age, passion, is to suppose an imperfect and objectless human being. Such absence would abrogate at once the term "continence," and the necessity for my writing. But they are universal; and this, their universality, fraught with happiness when disciplined, and with misery when uncontrolled, induces me, when I consider the slow growth and limited efficacy of the moral and religious curb, to advocate the introduction of worldly-wise and physico-moral training into the curriculum of modern education. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the major force of prostitution comes, except in extraordinary cases, by the desire of the male. It is visionary indeed to entertain the idea of summary repression, or of purifying the morals of men by parliament or police. The chances are that were the eruptive tendencies of prostitution driven inwards, grave internal disorder would be set up. If we were forced then to adopt preventive measures against this plague, instead of sackcloth and ashes for its arrest, we should find there was no better chance and no livelier hope of diminishing the supply of prostitution than by operating against the demand; no better means of doing this than sexual education or training to continence. The mind of the young, whose vices, like those of adults, are ignored by society, and who obey the promptings of instinct until the gates of reflection are opened, perhaps, for the first time, by suffering, is admitted by all to be the proper battle-ground of religion against sinfulness. On that same field, I say, would be opened just as appropriately the first campaign of virtue against vice.

The serious aggregate of adult misery resulting from the sexual malpractices of youth, determined me in a previous work* to advocate publicly what I therein termed "training to continence;" and having once broken the ice, I have now no hesitation in avowing my opinion

* "Treatise on Disorders of the Reproductive Organs in Youth, in Adult Age, and in Advanced Life."

that no material head will ever be made against prostitution unless some agreement is come to on this point among those who are concerned in education.

Young people of the present day are at full liberty, and, when gathered together in numbers especially, are accustomed, to sap the foundations of their physical fabric without a word of enlightenment *until found out*. After discovery, which the supineness of tutors or youthful cunning may defer indefinitely, comes warning, perhaps punishment. With the accident, then, of discovery or secrecy varies the amount of physical mischief they are permitted to work upon their frames, and the intensity of evil inclinations they may foster and store up for the perversion of their future steps.

The heart of the child is wicked, but his mind has well been called a fair book, on which he who will may write some lasting record. I cannot be in error, though I may be reiterating a vain platitude, when I urge that the guides of our youth should show their charges more of the sloughs and pitfalls that beset the way through the world. The general wrongness, deformity, and punishment of abstract vice, the beauty, consolation, and reward of abstract virtue, have been hitherto the beginning and end of our moral training. This system has brought us indifferently well, so far as we may as a nation pretend to be advanced, but I leave it to those who have the care of souls to say how far that may be. I maintain that a most salutary innovation upon it would be to take precedence of the instructor in vice, who is ever at hand to the young, and to forearm the child against the most insidious disguise of the evil one, the dress of pleasure. An instructor who should awaken the mind of youth to the sinfulness and worldly folly of destroying that transient shrine of the heaven-lent immortality, man's body, would surely be materially advancing the eternal as well as temporal interests of his pupil. No more doubt can exist that the health and wealth of the adult may be influenced for good or ill by the direction of the youthful *idées génésiques*, than that such direction is at present left to chance. The illustration of the seventh, which of all the commandments has the greatest practical bearing upon the earthly career of man, and is of course no less important to his future than the others, is, under our system, evaded, while every possible light is thrown upon the others. No amount of time would, I believe, be deemed wasted, which a spiritual pastor and master had spent in illustrating the nine commandments, whose breach by untutored man is not a matter of certainty, and obedience to which may be almost enforced by precept. But the one of the ten that is directed against unlawful use of the arch function of man, namely, that of procreation, and has to war against not only abstract sinfulness but also against positive lust, is so shunned by schoolmasters, that boys have to ask themselves at years of puberty, has the adultery of the commandment any wider sense than the adultery of the dictionary? What wonder, then, if passion and the force of example should press into their service at a critical period a conveniently-restricted interpretation of this word; and then the three together should clear the first and often the last feeble entrenchment thrown up by conscience. Thus, the boy who was yesterday *in statu pupillari* at a public school, and has to-day the run of the London streets with some guineas in his pocket,

may find to-morrow morning that he has taken a vast step in his education as a man of the world. To-day he may be in rude elastic health, with what he considers a stock of vitality to spare. In a week's time he may be carrying a foul disease about with him, and even ignorantly or carelessly disseminating it. In a month or two his superfluous power is gone, and the natural stock nearly so: the former burnt to waste in the furnace of his body, the latter draining off by disease. It is in inexperienced youths, with fresh constitutions, that venereal diseases leave their most permanent marks, while they lightly glance off the man of full age, who thinks twice at least before exposing himself to their attack. The latter is timid and suspicious; seeks professional advice on the faintest show of symptoms—often, indeed, before them. Fear, shame, or ignorance may prevent the former from adopting remedial measures until the enemy has made such progress that a thread of anxiety is woven into his career, and perhaps a permanent taint into his blood. If the effects are not serious, his escape is a matter of congratulation—his surprise deferred. Having once passed the fence of virtue, and found sweet fruit in the orchard of evil, he is encouraged to tempt chance again, until disease, financial embarrassment, or a painful *liaison* makes a reflective man of him at one *coup*. Many fathers of the present day, recognising this truth, are apt to give a few words of worldly advice to lads starting in life; but these are rather how to deal with the ill consequences of dissipation, than how to tame fleshly lust itself. To leave the acquisition of this experience to be a matter of chance or purchase, is, from my point of view, a wrong not merely against the individual, but against the community, unworthily done in the name of modesty. Having first, to please what is called “delicacy,” left in his own hand the sexual education of the child and the school-boy, we send him forth, again to please delicacy, unarmed, to meet an unknown, terrible enemy, who will come in the guise of love, and be welcomed by natural instinct. He may encounter the finished votaries of vice, or girls themselves unarmed except by that veil of native modesty which, by its mere self, offers but a flimsy resistance to the assault of energetic passion. Whether he becomes the victim or the maker of harlots is an affair of chance.

But surely much of this might be avoided were the parents, the educators, and the spiritual guardians of youth charged, in all cases—first being as well informed themselves on physiological points as we must suppose them to be upon religious—with opening carefully to the eye of youth this page in the book; with showing, by degrees proportioned to the age of the pupil, the worldly impolicy, as well as the impropriety, of vice; and with prescribing to adults who would trample upon their lusts, and enforcing upon children, hygienic and gymnastic training, according to the temperament of each. In another treatise I have dilated upon the possibility of thus abating the sexual suffering of single men; and my observations have been received with so much favour, that I have no fear in urging again the value of physical regimen, not only to the male, but as a material check upon the demand for female prostitution. I urge, in fact, that, instead of, as at present, ignoring the sex passion and its consequences, the Protestant Church should boldly follow the example of her elder sister of Rome, and at least prepare the way for the crusade against vice which may succeed

the vain sighs and wishes of to-day. Our Church can never, I am aware, exert the power which the confessional places in the hands of the Roman ecclesiastics ; but I am convinced that she might do something. It is not for me to prescribe or to recommend a course to her ; but I desire her movement. I am willing to give her the precedence ; I would have science co-operate with her ; but I would not linger for her.

Whatever may be thought of my proposal that the parents, spiritual trustees, and schoolmasters should administer the proper antidote before the "leprous distilment" of moral poison has been poured by the many agencies of the world into the ear of the child, I think few will be hardy enough to contend that modesty should be longer pleaded to bar anti-sensual instruction in the institutions for adult education now so common.

"Quocunque Verum," writing on moral progress in "The Times" of the 3rd June, observes justly enough :

"Our parochial clergy are gradually opening their eyes, I hope, to the fact, that when they have got their infant, day, and Sunday-schools into full working efficiency, (and in agricultural parishes how few can say so much as this?) their real work for and with the rising generation is only just begun. . . . The young men's society and the young women's class must be as integral a portion of parochial machinery as the day-schools or Sunday-school, if he would save many of his flock from that *descensus averni*, of which only the police who inspect, and the few private persons who visit, common lodging-houses have any realized idea."

This writer—than whom, perhaps, none more competent or benevolent could have taken up the pen—seems fully to corroborate my impressions as to the extent of the field yet open to the workers, the use which we may make of educational classes, and their very great present popularity. It is on the spread of these agencies, I confess, I much rely for diffusing useful knowledge, among both sexes about self-regulation, the control of fleshly inclinations, the evils attendant upon vice, the shapes it assumes, and the means of resistance to it.

There is no subject, however sacred or prolific of interest, that may not be desecrated or spoiled in treatment—no subject so unpromising, that, conscientiously yet firmly handled, it may not be made to yield up its modicum of good. I have such a strong belief in the present wide diffusion of evil knowledge, that I fancy physiological and moral lectures would not so often bring the blush of outraged ingenuousness as that of conscience to nature's confessional. Such lectures would at least serve to strip the gilding from the attractions of vice, and expose the horrors lurking beneath. They would confirm the strong, fortify the weak, and bring the foolish to confusion. So many men of knowledge and refinement have lamented to me that in their youth there had not been some active bitter, mixed by designing education, with their cup of pleasure—some word of warning as to the future taste of what is sweet in the mouth—that I am daily more and more convinced of the use and possibility of imparting to youth the knowledge of an efficacious curb of passion, with instructions how to apply it.

The Established Church, coming by her prelates, her deans, and her deacons, has descended from her pedestal of ancient ways to preach to the

million in popular areas, in the field, and at the market cross. It is now clear that Mahomet has determined to move to the mountain, and that the Church of England has resolved on popularising herself, and on collecting, as she has the right, in the highways and byeways guests for that ample wedding feast of which she is a steward, and which can never be over-crowded.

It is a sign of the times which requires no comment, that a Vice-Chancellor of England, whose purity and taste well fit him for such an office, not long ago presided at a large meeting of "a young men's improvement society." It is, indeed, "a sign of the times," that this and other good and eminent men, who have no single thing to gain but the approval of conscience, take their turn on the popular platform with the crotchetmongers and the adventurers, and we may rejoice in the assurance that public good comes of the exertions of all of them. We see again the finished statesman and the political tyro, moved it may be in part by other springs, unfolding, in town and country lecture-halls, the stores of information they have gained upon some speciality, and thus doing more than their forefathers dreamed of to diffuse not knowledge alone, but also respect for education and the educated. The colouring such men sometimes endeavour to lend to the information they impart is immaterial; they may be allowed this, for it is evanescent, and there still remains behind some useful seed to bear its fruit in season. I am not far wrong when I regard these things, and the popularity of debating classes, discussion forums, mutual improvement societies, and mechanics' institutes, as so many premonitory symptoms of an educational crusade against vice and ignorance, for which our country has been long preparing, and for which good men have sorely yearned. It may even not burst forth in our time, to gladden the few now living pioneers of popular instruction who first unfurled their colours against the bigotry of the upper classes and the semi-barbarism of the lower; but there is ample evidence how great is the position already won, how fair the prospect, and how spirited the troops.

The young men among whom intellectual pastimes are now spreading fast, are neither paupers, mechanics, nor agricultural labourers, who have little to do with the superficial prostitution of towns, and whose instruction would not diminish it; but they are of the class of whom I said before, that whether they become the victims or the makers of harlots is a mere matter of chance. I am able, of my own knowledge, to speak of London youths. Though no advocate of what is called "an old head upon young shoulders," I have seen with satisfaction the improved morals and advanced acquirements which have during my time accrued to that important class of young men who, being engaged in the lower departments of commerce and trade, may in fact be not inaptly termed undergraduates of those faculties. When I, having concluded a medical student's career in London and another in Paris, returned to this country not unacquainted with the habits and manners of young Frenchmen, I found myself by no means impressed by any superior morality among my compeers of the middle classes at home. I was, on the contrary, somewhat surprised to find their promiscuous viciousness and constant craving after fresh artificial excitements. Among the London youths I found the systematic streetwalkers, frequenters of night-

houses, disorderly brawlers, assailers of female modesty, habitual companions of positive prostitutes, to be much more unblushing, and, considering the comparative population at the two periods, more numerous than they now are. The "gent" of 1840, much such a creature as I have described, had overrun the town. He was not to the same extent as our genteel fathers, inclined to disorder, and mistake drunkenness for jollification. So far he was improved, and he welcomed with enthusiasm the invention of casinos and the naturalization of the then recent polka. But although by no means an extinct animal, he is no longer *the* feature of the town. He has in great measure left the unprofitable arena to the gently born and bred. The latter now rule at Cremorne and in the Haymarket, while your snob *pur sang*, is girding up his loins for the race of life in which he presses hard upon his betters, "coaching" himself in his Crosby Halls and in the public libraries, chess clubs, debating classes, and other multifarious educational institutions, two or three of which are to be found in every metropolitan and suburban parish.

Many of these men, then, are fighting their own battle, and without assistance, against the flesh. Every hour spent, as I have described, in intellectual amusement (the lowest denomination such pursuits are susceptible of), is an hour saved from idleness, the "root of all evil," and what is more from idleness at night, the great ally of vice and crime. But this, valuable as it is, will not do all, and to those therefore who have the influence or ability to collect and to hold them in thrall of eloquence, I commend the masses of young adults for instruction on the "training to continence," on the worldly evil attendant upon adultery and fornication, and on the duty of marriage. The absence of sexual knowledge, as all testify who are acquainted with the philosophy of vice, has not suppressed or diminished prostitution, but is concomitant with, if indeed it has not favoured its increase. The best of men and Christians are induced, in the extremity of their grief, to say the evil is irremediable, or to propose inadequate or impossible cures. If matters are at the worst, though I do not subscribe to this, the adoption of my suggestion, which is at least practicable, can do no harm. I propose, in fact, to engage in a pitched battle on the field of youthful minds, with the old insidious adversary, who will for ever beat us in detail if we suffer our hands to be tied by conventionalism. The chances of the open field are surely better than the undenied certainties of the ambushade. Danger to the army from its own weapons can only accrue from imperfect training to their use.

The classes next in the ascending scale of society come year after year more within the reach of such training as I advocate through the vast increase, not so much in the number as in the quality of middle class educational establishments. The standard of those now employed in teaching the children of the gentry is infinitely higher than that of the pedagogues of fifty years since; and if this does not hold good of the public schools, *par excellence*, it is at all events perfectly true of the numerous endowed grammar schools throughout the country. Many of these, before Lord Brougham's move in their behoof, were in a comatose state—their revenues mediatized oftener than not by lay warden or other impropiator—nominally kept up according to the founder's will,

but in point of fact, not equal to so many charity schools of the present time. They have, however, been brought round, thanks to the intervention of Parliament. The young of the farm labourer, who gets, I am sorry to say, but little of that instruction which the State should force upon him, has given place upon their benches to the children of the miller, the farmer, and the squire—the dilapidated building of former days, to a creditable specimen of the last new Gothic taste—the old incapable tenant of the ferula to whom the spoilers allotted, instead of its modern equivalent, the original 40% or 50% annuity of the pious testator, has retired in favour of a wrangler or a class man—and the free schools of England bid fair to raise within a century the standard of middle class education, as much as the infant school and the university will in the same time have influenced the ranks of society open to their action. Each of them that now comes under the charge of an educated gentleman, should be, to my thinking, a centre of physico-moral instruction.

Nine-tenths of the persons employed in education are, I dare say, well aware that the habitual and compulsory practice of gymnastic exercises and dietetics at school will assist the development of the physical frame, but they are, I expect, unacquainted with the fact that it would generally during childhood fully balance the *idées génésiques* we are all afraid of, and go a long way towards the work of self-restraint in the adolescent. During the last terms of every school-boy, who should be clothed for his battle of life with the armour of strength, truth, and modesty, I would have his tutor point out to him all those loose rivets and defective joints in that Christian harness that the lance point of the world will full soon find out. I would have explained to him, in sober, serious, unambiguous terms, the temptations to pleasant sin he will meet with, how best to encounter them—the worldly value to him of victory, the worldly consequences of defeat.

I am unwilling to censure, *in toto*, without having heard reasons officially stated, the tutorial prohibition which this year put an end, not alone to the public school cricket matches, but to the gathering of the generations in which thousands of us have been used to delight; but if, as has been alleged, it be traceable to the fear of metropolitan contamination to the elevens, and subsequent contagion to the young flocks of the schools, I think it a sad reflection upon those charged with the direction of these establishments, or to speak more generally upon “the system.” The age at which the flower of young England have been seen among us at these matches, is precisely that at which they should have entered the adolescent class of physico-moral training. Radiant with health and strength, and in the blush of mental power, their bodies and minds would at this age be best adapted to the trial. To just such boys an experienced and respected tutor should unfold from the appropriate point of view the hazards of the situation: from such he might gain, I know, inviolable promises of good order and self-restraint. But no! It has been decided, I am told, that not at the feet of Minerva, but in the lap of Venus, is our English lad to draw his first breath of worldliness,—take his first lesson of self-reliance and self-management. The former evades the responsibility which the latter seizes with avidity. The public schoolboy may have read of King Solomon and of Lot’s

daughters. He may be well up in the glories of Lais, Phryne, and Aspasia, Mistress Nell Gwynne and the fair Ninon, the Czarina Catherine and the Empress Theodora. It is his business, if he reads history, to be acquainted with the manners and habits of the French Regency, and the Court of Charles II. of England. He will find the thinly disguised immodesty of Eugène Sue and Paul de Kock in very good houses, and he will hear enough of Don Juan's improprieties to ensure his selection of that chaste work for early study. There are plenty of filthy books sold outside of Holywell-street, differing from many Holywell-street books, too, as having indecent insides as well as covers.* The Sosii of "the Row" reprint the British Dramatists to the letter, and the sayings and doings of the good Pantagruel are on every stall. Whichever way he turns in the fields of literature, he will find vice and immorality invested with dignity, beauty, and spirit. He will have gathered, in the course of his education, that sin is very sinful, vice very wrong and sometimes ungentlemanlike, gaming unprofitable, drinking low—but how to know these things when he sees them, in what form they will present themselves, and what are their immediate consequences he is utterly untaught. He is sent, while yet the *toga virilis* sits awkwardly upon his shoulders, to be "a man" at an university, or in the junior ranks of some profession, and thus planted out from the nursery into the big world he will remain, as the sham must be kept up, theoretically pure and untainted, and for all the instruction he will get, except by purchase, theoretically ignorant also upon all sexual matters.

Look we now to the Universities, which have, since the opening of the trade in education, an enormous and properly-increasing influence upon the future of the wealthier and higher classes—whose *alumni* are by courtesy considered men, and, indeed, during no inconsiderable portion of the twelvemonth, have more than all the leisure of full-grown adults—all the self-confidence natural to their age, and all its liability to temptation.

Is it not inexcusable that in these quasi-monastic institutions the continence of all classes should be left to chance—i.e., left alone? and that the possibility of aiding discretion and restraining indulgence by education and advice should be forgotten, or, if remembered, glossed over? The scheme of each University—on leaving which a man must shortly put on manhood, if its elements are in him—should, to my thinking, include a class of moral physiology and anatomy senior to that I have already indicated for children and schoolboys, and carried as far as the circumstances obviously demand.

The first man who founds a chair of worldly wisdom and moral physiology, and the University Synod which makes compulsory the attendance of all undergraduates at the classes of a learned, discreet professor of those sciences, would be doing the State good service. We should then hear less, I am convinced, of the ruinous effects of a college

* Very cheap editions of "The Castle of Otranto," Lewis's "Monk," and, I dare say, other innocuous romances, done up in obscene wrappers, are sold at high prices in Holywell-street. It is a good trick, as the buyer has no remedy for the surprise, and it dispenses with the necessity of keeping much seizable stock. This was, I believe, not alluded to in recent debates on Lord Campbell's bill.

career upon fathers and sons—of disappointed hopes and emptied pockets—of curates and professional men stretched for life on the rack of debt—of gentlemen, of large or small estate, cleaned out by the male and female acquaintances who undertake so willingly the charge of the college graduate when he steps into the great world as a freshman.

Our profession would see fewer instances of wasted minds and battered frames; society would have fewer unaccountable celibacies and scandalous marriages to wonder at; and a certain blow would be given to the great hold of prostitution, which, if the same society but lent its proper aid, would be the more effective.

What aid can society lend? What can society do?

I am aware that, although society has a positive power, its action is more perceptible as the avenger than the preventer of social crime, and is most commonly exerted upon those who have done flagrant wrong in full anticipation of the consequences, are prepared for them, and case-hardened against them, or on those who, having erred on the chance of impunity, are yet not unprepared for the reverse. The tendencies of English people are towards morality, and, in the present age especially, are fostered by the example and practice of the purest Court recorded in our history, which has done as much to make virtue popular, for fashion's sake, irrespective of her own attractions, as the *entourage* of other monarchs has done to give vogue to licentiousness. The highest persons in this kingdom so discourage vice, that all connected with the Court must preserve at least external decency. Though the days of duelling are, so to speak, past, a man dares not now flaunt a *liaison* with a married woman, and an illicit one of any description must by all means be kept as secret as money and contrivance can effect. Thus vice in private circles is held in check; but, owing to the bugbear of delicacy—the reluctance to hold council when the hearts of men are full—this gagging of the mouth that is ready to speak—society parts with the power of correcting evil that insists upon publicity.* Let me, however, hope for some better change.

Supposing the demand for prostitutes to have been, in some measure, checked by moral and physical training of males, the most obvious checks upon the supply in the power of society are—a modification of the restraints now imposed upon lawful wedlock among the educated classes, and a graver treatment of seducers and deserters of women. The measures which the State should adopt in the same direction are—the punishment of seducers; continued improvement in the dwellings of the

* The hollowness of our pretended ignorance of the depravity that surrounds us is thus eloquently exposed by an eloquent writer in the "Lancet":—"There flourish at the West-end, gorgeous houses where passers-by see only the painted face of Jezebel look out of the window, from which sight Virtue averts her face and blushes—yet we are asked to believe that she does not see or know why she turns away her head. The children of Cornelia inquire concerning 'the beautiful lady' whose quiet brougham stops the way at the door of the theatre or concert-room, and we are expected to assume that it is ignorance which makes the pure matron hesitate to answer them. Samson, whose fine proportions are the envy of the Domestic troops, drives Dalilah in the park; and we are asked to suppose that his sisters are unaware who it is sits by his side. The daughters of Dives, knowing all about the plot of the 'Traviata,' visit the opera to witness the apotheosis of a consumptive prostitute, and drive home through the Gehenna fair nightly held in the Haymarket;—yet we are expected to credit that they lay their heads on their pillows without considering what it all means."

poor, higher education of poor females, larger encouragement of colonization.

I have observed with pleasure, while preparing these sheets for the press, the great amount of public attention which has been vouchsafed to the project of a St. James's Reformatory for high-class prostitutes. I also agree with many writers who have reviewed the scheme, that a class reformatory is hardly a public object, and that the amiable experiment would be utterly incapable—as “beginning at the wrong end”—of diminishing the extent of the “great social evil;” and unlikely to remedy more than infinitesimally the miseries ensuing from it in the parish of St. James's, Piccadilly, which was a main feature in its prospectus. But a great deal has been done, by the thorough ventilation of the topic, towards “rending the veil of spurious delicacy.” Although I have been forestalled by various writers in arguments which I would willingly have brought forward with some show of originality, I cannot help rejoicing that I have been anticipated by sound thinkers commanding publicity for their views to a far greater extent than I can venture to hope for. The sparks of truth elicited by the friction of these minds have been carried far and wide, and have found so eager welcome from the public, that I am the more encouraged to fan them, and to hope that within our time we may live to see a salutary and efficient flame to light us from our difficulties.

I consider it would be alike ungenerous to attempt to paraphrase, and impossible to express better than himself, the ideas of “Theophrastus,” upon the anti-matrimonial tendencies of modern middle-class society, in his communication entitled, “The Other Side of the Picture,” to the editor of “The Times,” May 7, 1857:

“The laws which society imposes in the present day in respect of marriage upon young men belonging to the middle class are, in the highest degree, unnatural, and are the real cause of most of our social corruptions. The father of a family has, in many instances, risen from a comparatively humble origin to a position of easy competence. His wife has her carriage; he associates with men of wealth greater than his own. His sons reach the age when, in the natural course of things, they ought to marry and establish a home for themselves. It would seem no great hardship that a young couple should begin on the same level as their parents began, and be content for the first few years with the mere necessities of life; and there are thousands who, were it not for society, would gladly marry on such terms. But here the tyrant world interposes; the son must not marry until he can maintain an establishment on much the same footing as his father's. If he dare to set the law at defiance, his family lose *caste*, and he and his wife are quietly dropt out of the circle in which they have hitherto moved. All that society will allow is an engagement, and then we have the sad but familiar sight of two young lovers wearing out their best years with hearts sickened with hope long deferred; often, after all, ending in disappointment, or in the shattered health of the poor girl, unable to bear up against the harassing anxiety. Or even when a long engagement does finally end in marriage, how diminished are the chances of happiness! The union, which, if allowed at first, would have proved happy under worldly difficulty, has lost its brightness when postponed until middle life, even with

competence and a carriage. Perhaps the early struggles would have only strengthened the bonds of affection; but here I feel that I am on dangerous ground. Already I hear society loudly exclaiming that I am advocating improvident marriages, that I would flood the country with genteel paupers, that I am advising what is contrary to the best interests of society.

"But stay awhile, society. Your picture of marriages at thirty-five, with a Belgravian house for the happy couple, a footman in splendid uniform, and at least a brougham, is very pleasing; but there is a reverse to the canvas, and that a very dark one. How has the bridegroom been living since he attained his manhood? I believe that there are very many young men who are keeping themselves pure amid all the temptations of London life. God's blessing be with them, for they are the salt of our corrupt city. But I know that there are thousands who are living in sin, chiefly in consequence of the impossibility (as the world says) of their marrying. Some go quietly with the stream, and do as others do around them, almost without a thought of the misery they are causing, and the curse they are laying up for themselves. But many, perhaps most of them, are wretched under the convictions of their conscience. Living in the midst of temptation, they have not sufficient principle to resist its fascination, and although they know where God intends that they shall find their safety, yet they dare not offend their family, alienate their friends, and lose their social position by making what the world calls an imprudent marriage. The very feeling which Heaven has given as a chief purifier of man's nature is darkening their conscience and hardening their heart, because the law of society contradicts the law of God. I might touch upon even a more terrible result of the present state of things—medical men and clergymen will understand what I mean—but I dare not, and I have said enough.

"I must in sadness confess that in the face of the powerful tyranny of social law in this country, it is difficult to suggest any general remedy for this evil. But the mischief is on the increase with our increasing worship of money, and public attention ought to be appealed to on the subject. If our American eulogist be right in commending 'pluck' as one of our distinctive characteristics, it is not our young men who should lack the quality. If they will shake off the affectations of club life, and claim a position in society for themselves and for their wives, because they are qualified for it by education and character, and not merely because they represent so much money, they will soon force the world to give way, and strike down one of the greatest hindrances to their own happiness, both temporal and eternal. It will not in general be difficult to bring the daughters over to the same opinion. Mothers and sisters are seldom very hardhearted in such cases, and by united efforts the stern father may be induced to give his blessing, even though the happy couple (ay, happy, let the world sneer as it will) have to begin on little more than the proverbial bread and cheese.

"The recognition of this principle would do much to check some of our most deadly social evils. It would make many a girl whom the tyranny of the world now dooms to a joyless celibacy a happy wife and mother. It would raise the tone of character of our young men, bringing out into healthful exercise the home affections, which are now denied them, at the very time of life when their influence is most beneficial.

It would drive away all frivolity and effeminacy before the realities of steady work, which early marriage would oblige them to face. It would purify our streets, and check many a bitter pang of conscience, and save many a soul. We are experiencing the bitter fruits of man's law—let us see whether God's law will not work better."

The upper ten thousand too often, I fear, forget that the outside million—among whom, it has been quaintly said, they "condescend to live"—cannot be relied on to travel for ever in the grooves cut out for them by their betters, and assume that if no overt and organized resistance to the Medo-Persian ukases of society and fashion appears on the surface, those edicts are immutable—that tyranny permanent. But the fact is—and they should be reminded of it—that with regard to some things, and among them marriage, there is a numerous and increasing class, by no means the waifs and strays of the community, who are disposed, not to question or propose any change in the law, but simply to ignore it, and to "put up," as they say, "with the consequences."

The numberless cases of *mésalliance* daily occurring, whereof the majority entail, beside the paltry consequence of "Coventry," the very serious ones of unfruitfulness and domestic infelicity, seem to me to point the finger of warning to the guardians of our social code. That finger indicates a blot upon the table of the law,—cause of a nascent canker, which—not, perhaps, for many a long day, but certainly some day—if left untreated, will corrupt the fabric.

I extract the following passages from the admirable editorial remarks upon the foregoing letter of Theophrastus :—

"Do we not make difficulties for ourselves here, even where nature makes none, and create by our system a huge mass of artificial temptation which need never have existed? . . . A great law of Providence cannot be neglected with impunity, and this undue, artificial, and unnatural postponement of marriage ends in a great blot upon our social system. Vice is the result, and vice creates a class of victims to indulge in. If Providence has ordained that man should not live alone, and if conventional maxims or mere empty fashion and the artificial attractions of society lead to overlooking, or superseding, or tampering with this law, the neglect of a Providential law will surely avenge itself in social disease and corruption in one or other part of the system. It is not, then, because we wish for a moment to encourage improvident marriages, but because we feel convinced that our modern caution here has outstepped all reasonable limits, has become extravagant, has from being a dictate of natural common sense become a mere conventional and artificial rule, the voice of empty fashion, and a gratuitous hindrance to social happiness and the designs of Providence, that we call serious attention to this subject. The fear of poverty has become morbid, and men cry out not only before they are hurt, but before there is any reasonable prospect of it. They must see in married life a perfectly guaranteed and undisturbed vista of the amplest pecuniary resources before they will enter upon it. They forget that married men can *work*, and that marriage is a stimulus to work, and again and again elicits those latent activities of mind which produce not only competency, but affluence."*

* "The Times," May 9th, 1857.

But, from present signs, so sadly do I, with "Theophrastus," despair of any contraction, by the lawgivers of fashion, of the ample line of *chevaux de frise* they have skilfully disposed round lawful wedlock; so ferocious, on the contrary, is the struggle for "position," so terrible an *Ægis* lurks in the bitter sound of "genteel beggary," that I am more inclined to look for the sanction by society of self-immolation by superfluous virgins, the revival of convents, or the Malthusian modes of checking population which prevail elsewhere, than for the rich, still less the poor genteel, to permit their unfeesimplified or undowered offspring to increase and multiply young, so called "paupers," of still less estate, without the fear of mammon's law before their eyes, and in obedience to the will of Him who feeds the young ravens.

It is quite customary to argue, that the punishment of seduction cannot be apportioned otherwise than as present—namely, wholly to the female, unless where illegitimate offspring result from it, in which case the State imposes a fine of two shillings and sixpence per week upon the father. The grounds on which the legislature have decreed this state of the law are, that the woman, if not always the most active, is a consenting party. The result is practically that the consequences to the male being known and finite, thousands of men annually suffer themselves to be seduced—as the law has it—by designing women, who sacrifice not only their own future peace of mind and temporal prospects, but court the scorn of the world and bodily suffering to gratify inordinate passion. The unfortunate male is the victim, and by curious perversion the manufacture of prostitutes by female labour is rampant. This is another painful fiction, which, had I the power, I would attempt to dissipate. If I could not do so much, I would at least endeavour to devise a means of strengthening the male resolution. The next time the bastardy laws come up for consideration, I should propose inquiry how, while in other respects the mental inferiority of woman continues to be insisted on in all other particulars, she should be held paramount in that of seductive powers. That this is false is proved by the fact that the woman allows the sacrifices and sufferings she incurs to equipoise with those of her seducer. She is acquainted too well beforehand with both, to allow the hypothesis of her total ignorance. In the majority of cases she has plentiful knowledge of precedents; yet she falls. She must, therefore, either be temporarily insane, or permanently weaker minded. Her very liability to siege almost presupposes personal attraction, and personal attractions as naturally ensure vanity. There is never a fair start between man and woman *cæteris paribus*. Her side of the balance is always over-weighted. Enough of vanity alone to kick the beam is in her scale; yet because, from the day when a man in real earnest first set his wit against her, she was no more able to fly from his fascinating power than the quarry from the falcon, or the rabbit from the snake, but rather met her fate half-way, this strong-minded creature is by law considered the real seducer, and a number of the most estimable people in the world are ever ready to endorse without question this cruel article of the law's belief.

And here, again, must physiology be invoked to help the lawgivers and society to a more just conclusion. It will some day be taken into account I hope, that as (I believe) Coleridge said, the desire is on the

side of man, love of approbation on the side of the woman ; and law will be amended after deeply comparing the physiology of sinning men, not with that of virtuous, but of fallen women. We have hitherto set up for comparison an impregnable female *eidolon*, and because *she* was adamant have declared men to be the seduced, not the seducers.

We are used to talk, and we have, in fact, legislated, as if the gates of a woman's honour were of brass, and could not be opened but from within ; and as if the outer force required to beat them down could be calculated to a pound by an engineer. There are gates, it is true, and modesty is their keeper ; but the keeper may slumber or be bribed, or may make a fair fight against the foe and be beaten. But how does the righteous world act ? Though the castle and the gate, the porter and the enemy are all variable quantities—when the place falls, we always hang the garrison.

I extract the following passage from one of the many letters to the Editor of "The Times," evoked by the proposition of the St. James's Refuge :—

"The law of 1834, which, in my opinion, brought this mischief on society, was founded on a mistaken theory—namely, that women are the best guardians of their own honour. This is inverting the order of nature, and falsifying the common experience of all time. It is, in fact, splendid nonsense. The result is, that the law throws upon the weakest of the two offenders all the consequences of a vice in which she at least could only be a participator. There was, to my mind, something marvelously cowardly and unmanly in this. The best guardian of the honour of woman is he who, having gained her affections, has obtained a mastery over her judgment, and all that makes her respectable in society. But the days of chivalry are indeed past, since men become seducers by Parliamentary licence. It is, however, alleged that the Legislature has provided means for securing justice to the woman so betrayed, by allowing her to produce corroborative evidence. This is adding insult to injury. Why, Sir, between 300 and 400 of these cases come under my own observation every year, and I can affirm that in nine cases out of ten there is a total absence of any evidence whatever—and why ? Because the men who practise these frauds are for the most part habitual seducers, and take all the precautions which such scoundrels are likely to invent. It is not an uncommon circumstance for two or three young women (mere girls, in some instances) to be with child at one and the same time by one man, and that man a married man, and yet the law has no remedy for this, because there is no corroborative evidence. But suppose it otherwise, what is a penniless girl to do against a fellow who can afford to fee counsel to browbeat and frighten her out of court ?

"*Let every member of Parliament who voted for a law founded upon the Arcadian notion that every woman is the best guardian of her own honour apply it to his own daughters, and watch the result. Why, he gives the lie to it every day of his life, his anxious thought being how best to guard his children from the pollutions which surround even them. If, therefore, the rich practically repudiate the notion, why apply it to the children of the poor, who on leaving home at an early age for service are deprived of the restraints and checks of kindred ?*

"It will then be asked, what are the remedies for such obvious evils? I answer that paternal governors should adopt the same course in their collective as they would in their individual character—namely, to distinguish between habitual profligacy and a casual error; to afford to the woman who appears for the first time in the character of a mother, a facility for affiliating her child which should be denied to her who commits a second offence. By this means a great end would be accomplished—viz., fixing the consequences where they ought to rest—on the actual seducer of the woman. Sterne, no mean observer of human nature, asked one hundred years ago—'Is there no difference between one prepensely going out of the way, and continuing there by depravity of will, and a hapless wanderer straying by delusion and wearily treading back her steps?' I ask the same question."—(J. B.)

I have taken the liberty of italicising, without farther comment, a passage which I should especially recommend to the consideration of our lawgivers and others whom it may concern. But the whole appears to me valuable, as conveying the impressions of a thoughtful and experienced man, who evidently is versed in a sphere other than metropolitan, and serves me to open, I think, not inappropriately, a few observations upon the bastardy laws, a change in which would be a considerable step towards prostitution prevention.

It cannot be denied by any one acquainted with rural life, that seduction of girls is a sport and a habit with vast numbers of men, married (as suggested by "J. B.," which I fully corroborate) and single, placed above the ranks of labour. The "keeping company" of the labouring classes, accompanied by illicit intercourse, as I have before (see page 71) explained, as often as not leads to marriage; but not so that of the farmer's son, farmer, first, second, or third-class, squire, or squireen. Many such rustics of the middle class, and men of parallel grades in country towns, employ a portion of their spare time in the coarse, deliberate villainy of making prostitutes. Of these, the handsomer are draughted off into the larger communities, where their attractions enable them to settle; the others are tied to the spot of their birth and fall. Men who themselves employ female labour, or direct it for others, have always ample opportunities of choice, compulsion, secrecy, and subsequent intimidation, should exposure be probable and disagreeable. They can, for a time, show favour to their victim by preferring her before her fellows; they can at any time convenient discharge her. The lower sort of them can often procure access to the Union for both her and her offspring; and the upper can scheme marriages of the nature alluded to at page 69. With these, and with the gentlemen whose *délassement* is the contamination of town servants and *ouvrières*, the first grand engine is, of course, vanity—the little more money that will get the poor girl a little more dress, admiration, and envy than her equals enjoy. Then, when the torch is set to the fire, woman's love of approbation helps her to her own destruction. Then cheap promises—promises of marriage—made to be broken—which, however, the strong-minded one of the Parliament's imagining is always ready to believe—and promises often taken down on the rolls of Heaven, whose breach must be a sin against the God of Mercy himself, of care for the woman and her offspring. But the latter are as easily snapped as the former, and the woman

whom her neighbours call a scheming hussey for thinking of a marriage above her station, is called a silly fool for her pains if she fail, without inducements of ambition, before the assault of passion only. She may be with child, or she may not, but she has at law a remedy for her wrong. Yes, and what is it? Will the strong-minded one apply herself to it?—and how often? She loved too much, and she still loves overmuch, in nine cases out of ten, to dream of worldly wisdom, or, as she calls it, persecuting her child's father. The worldly wisdom that overcame, as the sham has it, the hardihood and modesty of the male, and turned his head, cannot get its poor owner into a court of justice, even when her parents are so minded, and funds are forthcoming for a breach of promise action. Her remedy is a farce so far; or rather it is a farce to say that it has any prophylactic or *in terrorem* value. But she has more remedy—or her friends have; for her father, whom the law supposes to be charged with the maintenance of his children when derelict by the world, and therefore to have in return some presumed employer's right over them, may proceed at common law for loss of her services. But this he can only do if he has means, inclination to face the extreme of publicity and abuse, courage to meet a heavy preponderance of law and public feeling against him, and can adduce an amount of corroborative evidence which should suffice to carry a much more heavy conviction. This machinery, which stands upon a fiction, is cumbrous, and its results are rare and generally ridiculous. It amounts, in fact, to no remedy for wrong; and the crime which it is supposed to check flourishes under its pleasant shade. There is, however, one tolerably certain method of enforcing law against a man who, having seduced, has deserted a woman and her child. When we have recited that, we may close the list of remedies. She may apply to a bench of magistrates for a summons. The summons is granted; and the man found, or not found, the usual result is "an order in bastardy," in pursuance of which the maximum sum of half-a-crown is due and payable by the father each and every week for the support and maintenance of the said infant, but for that of his strong-minded seducer—nothing!

Sighing,—or, it may be, smiling compassionately at the crestfallen appearance of the strong one who has found hardihood to come before them,—the bench of justices regret their inability to do more for her. They would make an example if they could, they say in some instances; in others, they make an order for only 1s. 6d. or 2s. a week. The magistrate, who is a family man, and has ever grown a crop of wild oats, gives a sad thought or two to the case as he jogs home; and has even been known to advocate in public some more extended protection of women. But the plague is for all that—as it may be when I, too, am passed away—yet unstayed. The days of chivalry are gone indeed, and the honour of all women but those of his own house is so much a by-word with the Englishman—their bodies so often his sport—that the reform of the bastardy law, and the thence resulting check to prostitution, may chance to be deferred until a sense of common danger shall have made us all fellow-agitators.

If I could not get imprisonment of the male party to a seduction substituted for the paltry fine of half-a-crown a week, I would at least give to the commonwealth, now liable to pecuniary damage by bastardy, some

interest in its detection and punishment. The union house is now often enough the home of the deserted mother and the infant bastard: and the guardians of the poor ought, I think, to have the right, in the interest of the commune, to act as bastardy police, and to be recouped their charges. I would not allow the maintenance of an illegitimate child to be at the expense of any but the father. I would make it the incubus on him, not on its mother; and I would not leave his detection, exposure, and money loss in the option of the latter. A young man who now has a second or third illegitimate child, by different women, has not lived without adding some low cunning to his nature. It often happens that a fellow of this sort will, for a time, by specious promises or presents to a girl he fully intends ultimately to desert, defer making any payments for or on account of her child. If he can for twelve months, and without entering into any shadow of an agreement (and we may all guess how far the craft of an injured woman will help her to one that would hold water), stave off any application on her part to the authorities, her claim at law is barred; and she herself, defied at leisure, becomes, in due course, chargeable to her parish or union. But not thus should a virtuous State connive at the obligations of paternity being shuffled on to its public shoulders, when, by a very trifling modification of the existing machinery they might be adjusted on the proper back—permanently or temporarily, as might be considered publicly expedient. I would enact, I say, by the help of society, that, in the first place, the seduction of a female, properly proved, should involve the male in a heavy pecuniary fine, according to his position—not at all by way of punishment, but to strengthen, by the very firm abutment of the breeches-pocket, both him and his good resolutions against the temptations and force of designing woman. I would not offer the latter, as I foresee will be instantaneously objected, this bounty upon sinfulness—this incentive to be a seducer; but, on the contrary, the money should be due to the community, and recoverable in the county court or superior court at the suit of its engine, the union; and should be invested by the treasurer of such court, or by the county, or by some public trustee in bastardy, for the benefit of mother and child. The child's portion of this deodand should be retained by such public officer until the risk of its becoming chargeable to the community quasi bastard should be removed by the mother's marriage, or otherwise; and the mother's share should be for her benefit as an emigration fund or marriage portion. Persons acquainted with the country will bear me out, that many a woman not married by her seducer for economy's sake (which would satisfy justice), would, with a dower, even thus accruing, soon re-enter the pale of society through the gate of matrimony. I think that very useful knowledge of such a law as this would be rapidly diffused, and be found materially to harden men's hearts against female seductions.

Morality based on fear has, I grant, a most rotten foundation. But the reader must remember that the ear and heart of man, once barred by salutary caution against the charmings of all save exceptional and ungovernable lust, would be much more accessible to the moralizing influence—the legitimate attachment—which I have proposed that society should simultaneously hold out at a cheaper rate. To the practical, systematic seducer—no uncommon character—upon whom moral

argument is, and always will be, thrown away, this pursuit would, under such a *régime*, become a very first-class and most expensive luxury, demanding more money, craft, and time than many of us have to dispose of.

The careless man, who is, as the law now stands, supposed to be the secondary or passive party, finding that seduction, besides being neither so convenient nor so creditable as marriage, was nearly as costly—especially when often given way to—would cease to expose himself unguardedly to the illicit blandishments of womankind. It would be a hard matter for an intelligent girl to compass her own estrayal against the conscience that her pecuniary profit would be nothing, her public shame in the power of her neighbours, and that her intended victim was armed against her by a *chevaux-de-frise* of pounds, shillings, and pence, replacing, for their joint good, the trivial weekly half-crown, which is at present no defence to him—no check upon either his or her propensities. Supposing, again, for the sake of argument, that the sin and the gratification of a seduction are shared in common; few, I presume, will deny that practically, and in most cases, the female pays all the penalty? Are we not called upon, then, by common justice, if not by religion, to invite some such change in the law as shall help to guard the pair from the sin, and, at all events, secure a more equitable adjustment of the consequences.

I cannot close these observations without again drawing at some length upon the eloquent article in the "Westminster Review," to which I am already so much indebted. The quotation, even if the passage be well known to them, must be welcome to all men of feeling who take an interest in the subject, and doubly welcome to those who are yet unaware what pure hearts, powerful minds, spirit-stirring pens have preceded me in this agitation:

"The third needed change in social ethics is this: that the *deserter*—not the seducer—shall be branded with the same kind and degree of reprobation with which society now visits the coward and the cheat. The man who submits to insult rather than fight; the gambler who packs the cards, or loads the dice, or refuses to pay his debts of honour; is hunted from among even his unscrupulous associates as a stained and tarnished character. *Let the same measure of retributive justice be dealt to the seducer who deserts the woman who has trusted him, and allows her to come upon the town.* We say the deserter—not the seducer: for there is as wide a distinction between them as there is between the gamester and the sharper. Mere seduction will never be visited with extreme severity among men of the world, however correct and refined may be their general tone of morals; for they will always make large allowances on the score of youthful passions, favouring circumstances, and excited feeling. Moreover, they well know that there is a wide distinction—that there are all degrees of distinction—between a man who commits a fault of this kind under the influence of warm affections and a fiery temperament, and the coldhearted systematic assailer of female virtue, whom all reprobate and shun. It is universally felt that you cannot, with any justice, class these men in the same category, nor mete out to them the same measure of condemnation. But the man who, when his caprice is satisfied, casts off his victim as a worn-out garment, or a damaged toy; who allows the woman who trusted his protestations,

reciprocated his caresses, shared in his joys, lay in his bosom, resigned herself to him, in short,

‘In all the trusting helplessness of love,’

to sink from the position of his mistress to the loathsome life of prostitution, because his seduction and desertion has left no other course open to her—who is not ready to make any sacrifice of peace, of fortune, of reputation even, in order to save one whom he has once loved from such an abyss of wretched infamy—must surely be more stained, soiled, and hardened in soul, more utterly unfitted for the company or sympathies of gentlemen or men of honour—than *any* coward, *any* gambler, *any* cheat !

“When once the morality of the world has recovered a healthy tone on this subject, and desertion is branded as unmanly and dishonourable, seduction will become comparatively rare ; for men will be chary of contracting obligations which they feel must cling to them for ever. All men will feel then, as the ingenuous and kind-hearted feel now, how sad a mistake it is to suppose that the chains of illicit love are at all lighter or weaker than those of more public and legitimate connexions. ‘It never happens,’ says one of our chief novelists, ‘to a man of just and honourable feeling, to make a woman wholly dependent on himself, and to shut on her the gates of the world, without his discovering, sooner or later, that he has not only encumbered his conscience, but has more effectually crippled his liberty, and more deeply implicated his peace, than by all the embarrassments of the Church.’”

Having, in the chapter on “Causes of Prostitution,” referred to the vice bred, like filth, from the miserable herding of the lower orders, it becomes me also to number the improvement of their dwellings among preventive measures. The passing of the Common Lodging-house Act of 1851, rendering compulsory the registration of such houses and the compliance of their keepers with certain regulations demanded by decency and cleanliness, has been a step in the right direction ; and the results reported by Captain Harris, of the police force, are satisfactory as showing how much has been done—painful as showing what is still to do.

It appears that notices to come under the operation of that act have been served upon the keepers of 14,500 houses. Of these, 6292 have been surveyed and measured to accommodate 91,000 persons: 2355 houses, capable of receiving 42,000 persons, have been actually registered ; but only half of them, adapted for 28,000 lodgers, remain upon the books. Nearly 7000 houses and parts of houses wholly unfit for registration have been closed ; and 700,000 domiciliary visits, which have been made by the police during five years, have met with the support of the classes benefited, instead of that active or tacit opposition which the lodging-house-keepers might have been expected to promote.

That much sanitary ground has been gained is proved by the professional certificates appended to Captain Harris’s report, which establish that the inmates of registered lodging-houses enjoy an immunity from fever and epidemic diseases as compared with the same class living under other conditions. If, however, the calculation be correct, that nearly 500,000 people resort nightly to such places, it is clear that their whole number have not yet been brought under supervision. This must be a

work of time ; but enough good has resulted hitherto to encourage us to proceed in what is obviously the way of right.

A step above these common lodging-houses are the so-called private dwellings, where each chamber is let to a separate family. These are subject by law to none but health inspection ; but their occupants being generally of a class to whom all decency within their means is as grateful as to the wealthiest, the promiscuous crowding is a source of pain to them, that the public would farther its own interest by helping to alleviate. None can feel more acutely than the working classes of all grades the great difficulty of procuring wholesome dwellings near the seat of their labour. Many men live miles away from their work in order to preserve their growing families from the moral and physical contamination of the crowded courts and alleys, in which only they could find lodgings within their means. The State by itself, or by energetically putting the screw of compulsion upon the municipalities who are slow to avail themselves of permissive enactments to love their neighbours as themselves, should hold out a helping hand to the working million, who are, for want of dwellings adapted to their use, drifting to and fro among the wretched London "tenements," or reduced to harbour in the common lodging-house.

This packing of the lower classes is clearly not yet under control, and seems liable to aggravation by every new thoroughfare and airway with which we pierce our denser neighbourhoods. While it prevails, who can impute the defilement of girls, the demoralization of both sexes, as blame to the hapless parent who does the best he can with his little funds, and procures the only accommodation in the market open to him ? It is preposterous, as I have before hinted, to attribute the prostitution so engendered to seduction, or to vicious inclinations of the woman. From that indifference to modesty, which is perforce the sequel of promiscuous herding, it is a short step to illicit commerce ; and this, once established, the reserve or publicity of the female is entirely a matter of chance.

A zealous writer in the "Weekly Times," in a recent paper on the dwellings of the labouring classes, has based a suggestion upon Captain Harris's report, which, whether welcomed as it deserves or not by those to whom he appeals, shall at least be put on record here, with the aspirations of myself and others :—

"Captain Harris says that, 'if houses were erected or converted to the purpose of being let out in rooms to married couples, at rates not exceeding a shilling a week per room, with the necessary provision for health and cleanliness, the greatest benefit would be conferred.' The suggestion is an excellent one, and we trust that some attempt may be made to put it in practice. But the want is too large to be supplied by private enterprise or individual benevolence. The Government and the municipal bodies of the great towns ought to take the work in hand. We will not enter upon detail, but we may point to the large tracts of waste ground in London and Westminster which seem to offer opportunity for the erection of dwellings for the working classes. Along the new line of street which the Corporation of London is opening from Farringdon-street to Clerkenwell, such houses might be erected, and would be a profitable investment. There are other tracts in the neigh-

bourhood of the Abbey which might be advantageously appropriated to the same purpose. Something ought to be given in return for the houses swept away in clearances and improvements. The difficulty of procuring suitable dwellings is one of the heaviest evils pressing on the industrial classes in large towns. It is a perennial curse to them. So long as the present state of things is allowed to endure, it is idle to talk of education, or to preach temperance. The miserable homes of the majority, who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, are at the root of our most deplorable social evils. The most elevating influence that can be exercised on man is to teach him self-respect. We fully adopt the dictum of a contemporary, that 'the bodily state of every man must be the basis of his mental state.' The man who is compelled to see his family withering in some over-crowded house in a pestilential court must lose energy, and can scarcely escape from despair. Place him where he can enjoy the light of heaven, and all the appliances of comfort and decency—make his home habitable and cheerful, and he will the more readily practise all the moral and social virtues."

I have again been anticipated, as follows, by the Editor of "The Times," in the argument—obvious enough, perhaps, when found out—that among the preventives we ought to consider of before we attempt the *cure* of prostitution, should be numbered an altered and improved system of female training :—

"Now, when we examine our system of training for girls of the poorer class, we see one very important defect immediately in it, and that is, that they receive no instruction in household work. Girls are taught sewing in our parish schools, and very properly, because, even with a view to domestic service, sewing is an important accomplishment; but they are not taught anything about household work. We do not say that a parish school could teach this, for household work can only be really learnt *in* a house; the schoolroom can provide napkins and towels, but it cannot supply tables, chairs, mantelpieces, and carpets for rubbing and brushing; and, the material to work upon being wanting, the art cannot be taught. But this is only explaining the fact, and not altering it. Household work is not learnt, and what is the consequence? The department of domestic service in this country is hardly at this moment sufficiently supplied, while crowds of girls enter into the department of needlework in one or other of its branches, and of course overstock it enormously. Add to this a sort of foolish pride that poor people have in the apparent rise which is gained in rank by this profession,—for, of course, every one of these girls is ultimately to be a 'milliner,' which has for them rather a grand sound. The metropolis, sooner or later, receives this vast overplus of the sewing female population, and the immense milliners' and tailors' and shirt-makers' establishments hardly absorb the overflowing supply of female labour and skill, while, of course, they profit to the very utmost by the glut of the labour-market. A vast multitude of half-starving women is the result of the system; whereas, had household work formed a part of their instruction, besides a better supply of the home field of service, what is of much more consequence, the colonies would take a large part of this overplus off our hands.

"What is the natural remedy, then, for this defect in the training of

girls of the poorer classes in this country? The remedy is, of course, that they should be taught, in some way or other, household work. At present, in the absence of any such instruction as this, it must be admitted that, however incidentally, the sewing which is taught in all our parish schools is simply aiding the overflowing tide of needle labour, which is every year taking up such multitudes of young women to the metropolis, and exposing them to the dreadful temptations of an under-paid service. And how is household work to be taught? Well, that is, of course, the difficulty. There are, as we have said, great difficulties in the way of our parish schools taking it up. The experiment, however, has been tried, in different places, of special institutions for this object; and, in the absence of any formal and public institutions, the houses of our gentry and clergy might be made to supply such instruction to a considerable extent, and without any inordinate demand on private charity. Extra labour, as every householder knows, is often wanted in every domestic establishment; it is even wanted periodically and at regular intervals in a large proportion of our good houses. It would be of great service to the country if a practice, which is already partially adopted, were more common and general—that of taking parish girls by turns for these special occasions. This might be done, at any rate in the country, to a large extent, and even a few days' employment of this kind in a well-furnished house, occurring at more or less regular intervals, would be often enough to create a taste and a capacity for household work. The profession of household service might thus be indefinitely widened, and a large class be created that would naturally look to such service as its distinct employment, and be ready, in case of disappointment at home, to seek it in the colonies.*

The needle has swallowed up the hearth. We seem, as a nation, to assume, that stitching is the woman's normal calling, and the duties of wife and helper, which are her real inherent rights, to be but secondary or alternative. We seem to consider that if we enable her perchance to crawl alone, independently of her destined staff, we have done our duty by her, whereas we have but evaded a parental responsibility. This responsibility would be fulfilled, first, by fitting her to be a wife in fact as well as in name—encouraging, by all means, the demand for her as such—helping her to the scene of that demand. But now, alas! society does much to qualify the poor girl who comes to seek its care *in formâ pauperis*, for slavery and prostitution, to encourage the demand for her in both these capacities, and to rivet her fetters when she has fallen. I am aware that to rail at the white slave labour market may be heresy of the deadliest against the demon of political economy; and that he who deplors the existence of the slop and contract system, and would relieve the market for man-labour by withdrawing female competition, may be proved, as far as commercial logic can do it, to be in grievous though amiable error. But it is an error of the heart in which, until farther advised of the impossibility of realizing the visions of the philanthropist, I, for one, am too happy to partake. Are those visions but as the mirage, or may we hope to find they are the shadows in the clouds of things that will be?

* "The Times," May 6th, 1857.

I shudder as I read each jubilant announcement of "another new channel for female labour." Each lecture, pamphlet, and handbill, that calls attention to some new field of competition, seems to me but the knell of hundreds whose diversion by capital from their natural functions to its own uses, is a curse to both sexes and an hindrance of the purposes of our Creator. No more impious *coup d'état* of Mammon could be devised than that grinding down against one another of the sexes intended by their Maker for mutual support and comfort.

Free-trade in female honour follows hard upon that in female labour; the wages of working men, wherever they compete with female labour, are lowered by the flood of cheap and agile hands, until marriage and a family are an almost impossible luxury or a misery. The earnings of man's unfortunate competitor are in their turn driven down by machinery until inadequate to support her life. The economist, as he turns the screw of torture, points complacently to this farther illustration of the law of trade; the moralist pointing out how inexorable is the command to labour, too seldom and too late arrests the torture. He only cries enough when the famished worker, wearied of the useless struggle against capital, too honest yet to steal, too proud yet to put up useless prayers for nominal relief at the hands of the community, and having sold even to the last but one of her possessions, takes virtue itself to market. "And thus," as Parent says, "prostitution exists, and will ever exist, in all great towns, because, like mendicancy and gambling, it is an industry and a resource against hunger, one may even say against dishonour. For, to what excess may not an individual be driven, cut off from all resources, her very existence compromised? This last alternative, it is true, is degrading, but it nevertheless exists."

But if the national education of women is not to be confined to reading, writing, and needlework, what are we to do with them? says the ever ready *avvocato del diablo*. The ready answer is—TEACH THEM HOUSEWIFERY; and the rejoinder, how and where, was well met by the sensible and practical suggestion in the newspaper article above quoted, that household education should be incorporated to a much greater extent than at present, with the discipline of union houses and schools.

The parochial clergy and well disposed gentry of the country have ample opportunities, if they would embrace them, of diverting to household pursuits the crowds of young women who annually jostle one another into the ranks of needle-work. The hall, the parsonage, and the parish school would be the best of normal schools for cooking, scrubbing, washing, ironing, and the like. Their owners would gladly, I fancy, impart gratuitous instruction in exchange for gratuitous service, and every housekeeper will bear me out in saying that the knowledge of the business once acquired, the market for properly qualified domestic servants is ample and not half supplied, while that for every description of needlework has long been overstocked. The vanity of girls and mothers must, it is true, be overcome, but the greater economy of the proposed domestic education would go some way to carry the day in its favour; and if a true appreciation of the happiness that waits on colonization, and of the essentials to its success, were once to get well abroad among our people, their mother wit would lead them soon enough to grasp the

comparative value of the domestic and needlework systems of training. The best proof that something of the kind is practicable will be an extract from a letter, signed "St. Dunstan's in the West," to "The Times" of May 8th, 1857. The model institution the writer describes, which has reduced our theory to practice, and by thus ameliorating the education and position of a number of young women has borne its part in prevention of prostitution is, I think, well worthy of record here, and of imitation far and wide:—

"Some eighteen years ago this weak point in our parish-school system engaged the serious attention of a respected inhabitant of this parish—Mr. Thomas Sloan—now no more, and before his death he lived to see established, with the assistance of his neighbours, the 'St. Dunstan's Parochial Girls' Foundation School.' In this school, the funds of which are kept quite distinct, are draughted from time to time the girls from the ordinary girls' parochial school, when they have attained the age of fourteen. They are then boarded, lodged, and provided for, as well as instructed in all the duties of household servants by a competent matron and schoolmistress, until sixteen years of age. It is gratifying to add, the girls of the school have obtained so good a name for competency as domestic servants, that they always obtain good places, and the applications to the matron for servants from the Foundation School exceed the supply that can be afforded."

Major Powys, again, of the Soldiers' Daughters' Home, at Hampstead, that the good old plea of "it has not been tried" may not bar the way of improvement, gives the following particulars of an experiment now in progress at that institution. The foundation is too recent to admit of results being at present chronicled, but that they will prove eminently satisfactory no person who is alive to the extreme scarcity of what are often termed "servants of the good old school" can entertain a doubt.

"We are determined," says the gallant officer, "with the blessing of God upon our efforts, to prevent at least 123 poor girls from applying to the proposed 'Refuge' in St. James's parish, to which your powerful article in yesterday's paper so truthfully alluded.

"Our object at the Soldiers' Daughters' Home, at Hampstead, is not only to save more especially the motherless girl from destitution and its awful consequences, but to save her from over-education and its inevitable results. We are more concerned to train them for the kitchen, the laundry, the dairy, the nursery, the housemaid's work, with a little needlework and knitting, than to lead their minds through the difficulties of the present refined education, or their fingers through the intricacy of millinery excellence."

But let those remember—whose charitable alms and tear of pity are ever ready for the starving myriads; the half-starving million; the cheerless life of him who would, but cannot or may not, marry; the wretchedness of those who jump, ignorant of self-restraints, and desperate of lawful love, at lawless intercourse;—that the sympathy of individuals will do little more than elicit yet a greater breadth of misery. The tears which shall blot out prostitution must be wept in streams by the body politic and social. The body politic and social must hold out ungrudgingly, not the hundreds, but the millions of relief to those who appeal to it, not for charity, but for work. If nothing may ever be

done without an eye to trade, let them know that the profits on the investment will be large and the dividends regular.

The sun, they say, never sets upon our dominions; and true it is that, go far as you will towards his setting glories, there are rolling lands beyond that call for English hands; and English hearts that long for company. The cry for elbow-room is even now heard among ourselves, and were our population area limited to Great Britain, I would among the first deride my own exhortations to matrimony. But empire upon empire that will vindicate the glories of Old England when these islands may be swallowed up by jealous Europe, look to her to plant within their borders the germ of population; and she will not have fulfilled her mission, nor done her duty to herself and her children, until she has more than *shown* them the road to lands that flow with milk and honey, and whose best of fruits is peace of mind. This fruit may not be gathered by idle hands—drones may not eat that honey; but the young, and strong, and willing, who may not here hold up against the tide, may there find rest and plenty. Each scowling labourer, whom a week's more want may make a thief—and who can predict he would starve ere he stole?—each worn and weary needlewoman, every heartsick professional man and hopeless trader who oscillates at home between want of work that begets idleness and idleness that makes work distasteful, may find in those fair lands new work, new homes, new happiness. Removed from the scorn, or, what is almost worse, the inactive pity of society, even misery itself becomes more endurable; but no misery can hold its own against the effervescing vitality that the western colonist must draw perforce from the very air. There are regions as wide to the east, but the curse of gold is upon them: so let England, acting as a nation, wisely direct a flood of population upon the ample fields of her American colonies, where the useless must become useful, the worthless almost worthy, and where the emigrant who can work has but two alternatives—death or prosperity. If a perfect state is desirable, or worth considering—and the total absence of the evil I have been treating of would imply almost an Utopia—far larger schemes must be taken and reviewed than the reformation of a few ladylike specimens of the vice here and there, and the rightful direction of a few young minds. This is clearly my fair apology for the comprehensive nature of the preventives I have suggested, which, I repeat, are physical moral culture of the young males, housewifery education of young females, wholesale encouragement of marriage by society, colonization not by driblets but by tribes.

For the sufferings of labour, for the immorality of the community, my nostrum is, marry and colonize—colonize—colonize. I have neither space nor ability for a treatise on emigration considered politico-economically; but until better informed, I take it that the prospects of labour in this country have been already improved by the emigration of the last twenty years, for wages show symptoms of slow but permanent rise. It is well known that an apparent advance, and much more a real one, in the prosperity of the people, induces a great increase in the number of marriages; and I believe that by a large continuous export of middle and lower class labour to our colonies, we should convert and substitute a material for an apparent improvement in the condition of those left at home, thus favouring their conjugal tendencies and consequent morality.

By State promotion and conduct of such an exodus from this country to the colonies, we should be not only enlarging our breathing room here, but be planting in the West the natural course of all improvement, a succession Empire to our own, instead of, as at present, seeing the flower of our surplus population diverted to the improvement of the magnificent Western States of the North American confederation. The resolute non-encouragement of emigration by Parliament—for no person in his senses will argue that the present emigration department of the Government (though efficient as far as it goes) is more than a bagatelle—has always been to me so inexplicable that I cannot wonder at imputations put forward by the discontented of collusion between the aristocracy and plousiocracy to keep down wages. The colonies demand labour, and labour is redundant in the mother country, but yet neither the home nor the colonial Government will export it. As an article of merchandize, labour is worth ready cash to the colony, and once settled, becomes an annuity to the mother country, instead of an incubus on public or private resources. In the rural, not town, districts of Lower Canada alone, according to the replies to official circulars, there are at once urgently demanded 7932 farm labourers, each of whom might be married; besides 3102 adult and 3142 young females in various capacities. The town of Toronto alone sends a requisition for several hundred maid-servants, and the total immediate want of this one province is 25,000 head of workpeople, who are supposed by the colonial authorities to represent an immigration of 100,000 souls.

This official fact as to Lower Canada holds good, in all probability, as to New Brunswick, Upper Canada, Australia, Prince Edward's Island, and Nova Scotia. The lands undisposed of in the Canadas are 175,577,674 acres, and the average price of those sold last year was about ten shillings. Mail after mail brings prayers to England for more hands for her Western Empire, but the old country folds her arms, declines intervention, and confines herself to superintending the passenger arrangements of those who have capital enough to transport themselves. During five years this stolid mother country has checked and supervised the additional export of 1,200,000 of her offspring to the resources of the United States, a self-supporting community, where the emigrant is once and for all lost to us, both as a citizen and a customer, and of 204,000 only to the North American colonies, where the home of the Old Country is an evergreen memory to the emigrant, and his material connexion with it by the links of trade is unbroken. Not a man in Whitehall but knows that the best interests of the individuals and of this Empire had been served by reversal of these figures; but yet the Government of this day, directed by some sort of political economy—I presume from indications lately furnished in the case of the discharged Woolwich artisans—seem determined to let misery take its course, so long as the labour market be not disturbed.

We saw, it seems but yesterday, some thousand pair of hands, able with sledge and bill to forge and hack out a new colony, uplifted in our streets for most distasteful alms. Here was the raw material of empires going a-begging. Six pounds a-head* would have landed the peaceful

* There were 1012 persons sent abroad by the Woolwich fund, and a number of them provided with outfits, at a total cost of 6300*l*.

legion on the western shores, and made each man of them worth hundreds to the State. But neither the old nation, whose labour market they incumbered, nor the new one, whose wheels of progress they might grease, would be at the cost of their transport. So private charity, diverted from more fitting channels, stepped out to do the public work, and the victims of political economy, shaking the British dust from off their shoes, were drafted off to strengthen other States, and were lost to ours for ever.

I must plead the very intimate connexion of wages and population with morality as a last apology for thus wading almost out of my depth, and as it may appear at first sight to some readers, needlessly extending these remarks in a political direction. But when I consider the tens of thousands we might strike out of calculations upon prostitution by helping their emigration, I am from a social point of view indignant that society, which besides purgation, might reap profit from their transplantation, should confine itself to unavailing lamentation over their poverty and their sins. In a year's time we shall have bridged the Atlantic, connecting ourselves, I hear, not with our American colonies, but with the United States—to whom I grudge nothing but our people—by the monster ark now towering over Greenwich Hospital. She may chance to be the first of a leviathan line, adequate in reality to the depletion of our social system, though she may not be destined to effect the transfusion I advocate. I look anxiously for the experiment, which appears pregnant with results of importance. When the facilities for wholesale emigration come, as now seems within probability, to be developed, when due knowledge of the happiness attendant upon colonization has flashed upon the labouring classes, but not till then, we may expect an approximate solution of that good old problem, “how to get a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.” As this has long been a puzzle to the husbandman especially, I will take his case for the sake of argument. He who has coaxed Dame Nature of her gifts (no longer poured as from a horn of plenty) has seen the fruit of his handiwork paradoxically enhanced both in price and quantity, while his wages, representing the cost of so much bread, have barely kept pace with the one, without correction for the other. Steam, mechanics, and the opening of the trade in him (as an article of merchandize) by an altered law of settlement, have defeated (except in parts) the rise in his price which might have been expected. But the market for him, I should say in the phraseology of trade, shows symptoms of no very distant recovery. Mechanics and steam have made their rush and had their grand effect upon rural economy; the Arkwrights and Cromptons of agriculture have made their mark; and henceforth, as Nature herself seems to prescribe bounds to steam husbandry, its progress will be slow, and tend rather to excellence of results than economy of process.

The agricultural males* in this country, who, Magna Charta and civilization notwithstanding, are not very much more comfortably circumstanced than their forefathers, the villeins of feudal days, number

* Class IX. of the Census, “Agricultural,”		furnished 1,421,354 males.
Class X. ,, ,, Employed about Animals	,,	86,528 ditto.

Total 1,507,882 of all ages.

about 1,500,000, of whom 1,000,000 may be of fit ages to bear arms. These men, who preserve the fighting quality of our ancient races, although their warlike spirit has been sedulously kept down by the governing classes, furnish in a great measure the military power of the Empire. The market for their labour is also sensitive to sudden abstractions. Recent events warrant us the expectation of a prolonged succession of calls for English armies, a probability which, though doubtless already discounted in Threadneedle-street, may not for years to come have its full effect throughout the country. The regular emigration of the people is already treading hard upon the heels of their increase, for it seems that the total exodus of 1851 was 335,966, and that of 1852 was 368,764, while the excess of births over deaths in England and Wales during the former of those years was only 220, 691.*

These circumstances seem to me to foreshadow an increased demand for the services of the agricultural labourer, whose profits—by which I here mean the excess of his wages over his expenditure in mere bread—are at a low point of depression. But suppose that in addition to this improved prospect the peasant who had none or inadequate means of escape from merry England, were on waking some morning to find that the colonial Parliaments had wisely offered a reward for him in money or a free passage, or both, and were ready, as they ought to be, to give him certain freehold land in consideration of stipulated service upon public works, and suppose that he should learn of these monster ships, their successful voyages, and the comfort of their passengers, and that the ship agent offering cheap berths, and the colonial emissary† offering free or assisted passages, were, in point of fact, competing for him with the farmer at the adjacent “Plough and Harrow,” I believe that with all his proverbial stupidity, this Bæotian would be shrewd enough to see his account in a rising market, and would let his lusty arms to the highest bidder. But even without quite all this competition, if instinctively comprehending the growing facility, cheapness, and comfort of colonization, our peasantry were to gird up their loins and leave the land in masses, as their compeers of Ireland have done, we might realize the almost visionary result of a standing premium on their class of labour. In such a case, the Englishman would make little of the fabled ties which are by poets’ licence supposed instead of ignorance and poverty

* Emigration from the United Kingdom has been going on of late years as follows :—

	To N. American Colonies.	To the United States.	To Australian Colonies, &c.	To other Places.	Total.
1846	43,439	82,239	2,347	1,826	129,851
1847	109,680	152,154	4,949	1,487	258,270
1848	31,065	188,233	23,904	4,887	248,089
1849	41,367	219,450	32,191	6,490	299,498
1850	32,961	223,078	16,037	8,773	280,849

The return does not distinguish the emigrants born in Great Britain from those born in Ireland.—*Census Tables.*

† Emigration propagandists may be shortly expected from the Canadas. The question has been seriously mooted, as also that of grants in aid by the Colonial Legislature.

to bind him to the soil. He would think no more of leaving the hamlet of his accidental birth and hopeless compulsory life, were he shown and given the means of escape, than the hawk unhooded and unjessed thinks of leaving the fist of her trainer.

He has all the makings of a colonist about him, for he has inherited strength, endurance, and a fancy for solitude from his forefathers, and in the craft of husbandry there is none like him. In these particulars he stands out from all classes of our population as eligible; but thousands of every class resemble him, in that they would joyfully welcome more favourable conditions of emigration, and would settle down in peace and plenty after a more or less troublesome novitiate. Were the holding out of such conditions engrafted upon our State policy, this country might, in my opinion, be soon relieved of everything like surplus population, and our dependencies receive no more than wholesome supplies of it. Higher wages, no longer needfully accompanied by dearer bread—in other words, comparative wealth—would fall to the lot of those left with us: happiness they might not hope for here would wait upon the pilgrims. A vast increase in MARRIAGES, the guage and sequel of even apparent prosperity, would as surely follow this improvement in the material condition of the people; and such increase could alone be drawn from those vast reserves of single persons which the Registrar-General denotes as applicable to the adjustment of the population, and which all must agree with me are also our bursting storehouses of VICE and IMMORALITY.

If I have conjured up visions, they are begotten of the visionary aspirations of those who have dreamed of putting an end to prostitution by exhortation, exorcism, or force. I at least am not guilty of invoking supernatural virtue (composed, as Burke said, of sad stuff) to dislocate the social fabric, or of proposing to suppress vice by enactment—a course which has led to nothing, or to pernicious results, wherever attempted. I have but endeavoured to sum up, for those who have not survived the fresh *dévouement* of youth—that unpractical enthusiasm which spurns all obstacles and counts no cost—the evidence I could collect, that all action is not impossible: the evidence that means may exist of partly preventing and modifying this evil, without hazard of moral or political danger.

THE END.



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CRITICISMS OF THE MEDICAL PRESS

ON

MR. ACTON'S PREVIOUS WORKS.

Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal, April 16th, 1851. (Leader.)

In this country, so remarkable for the external manifestations of piety and purity—for the spotless appearance of the “outside of the platter,” there has always been a difficulty in deciding whether we should, as a nation, virtually ignore the existence of prostitution, and that, in an economic point of view, its most disastrous consequence—venereal disease, or whether as in other countries, looking upon fornication as a natural and irrepressible result of human frailty and imperfect social organization combined, some attempt should not be made to render what is inevitable, as far as may be harmless to the community. Heretofore, under the pressure of a spurious modesty, check, than have publicly to point out their existence, the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, while little if at all less than in countries in which female purity is held comparatively cheap, is in this productive, in a sanitary point of view, of an amount of social contamination out of all proportion to the prevalence of the vice.

The immediate cause of this lamentable fact is, we believe, mainly to be found in the absurd regulation of our charitable institutions, which, under the mistaken idea that by affording relief to the victim of prostitution they would be encouraging the vice, refuse to extend their benefits to the subjects of syphilis. The consequence is, that they are driven to seek such inefficient treatment as can be obtained at the hands of some ignorant chemist, or what is worse, return to their wretched trade still further to propagate a disease which a squeamish puritanism has refused to alleviate. The sad results attending this folly are, however, so admirably shown by Mr. Acton,* whose pamphlet has suggested the present remarks, that we offer no apology for giving them at length.

“Consider,” he says, “the case of a prostitute who, having contracted syphilis, is unable to pay for advice or to lay by at her own rooms until she has recovered. Let us suppose she has been refused attendance or medicine at the institutions alluded to: is it to be believed that she will starve rather than risk contaminating a drunken mechanic who has a few shillings in his pocket. What is the result? Her own complaint becomes aggravated, she applies to the parish, which is bound to relieve her, take her into the house, or send her to the hospital. It is society that suffers, as instead of at first receiving a little medicine, she must now probably be maintained for three months at the public expense. But the ‘harlot’s progress’ does not end here: she has infected a married man; he communicates syphilis to his wife, and the mother to the child. The father is afraid to confide to his wife the nature of his complaint, the woman is ignorant of the consequences until the disease has made considerable progress, and thus we have an entire family converted into ‘non-effective’ individuals. Death overtakes a large proportion of the children thus infected, the health of the parents is permanently damaged, and he who turned the afflicted prostitute from the hospital door, may, perhaps, for the first time learn that he has sent abroad ‘the pestilence that walketh by night,’ to afflict the innocent mother and the child yet unborn.”

This is no overstrained picture, but one, the truthfulness of which every medical man must recognise, and it behoves us as a portion of the duty we owe to society, to raise our voices against the monstrous folly that continues to deprive venereal patients of the benefits of our ordinary medical charities. That it is most unreasonable so to do, a moment’s reflection will show, for if it be right to reject one class of maladies because they owe their origin to impurity and sin,—it cannot be right to admit others equally the heirloom of iniquity. If the consequences of the indulgence of the most imperious passion of our nature be thus hardly dealt with, the more beastly vice of drunkenness should not escape; and the diseased liver, the dyspepsia, and the swelled legs of the gin drinker should on the same principle be denied relief.

But it is altogether as inconsistent with the spirit of toleration which marks the age, thus to visit the backslidings of a fallen nature, as it is repulsive to the dictates of Christianity, and, what will perhaps have greater weight with some minds, opposed to the best interests of society, moral and pecuniary. The abatement of the causes of syphilis must one day take its place beside the many other questions involved in the sanitary movement, and it is to medical men we must look for the means of favouring this event, the chief of which means will be the combating the prejudices which have hitherto prevailed. Not only must the number of special hospitals for syphilis be increased, but what we contend for in the present article, our general hospitals must no longer be closed to the venereal patient. In this way alone, by admitting of an early remedy, will this fearful evil be moderated; and we most earnestly invite those of our readers who have any influence with the governors of hospitals, to urge the abolition of laws at once uncharitable and mischievous.

Medical Times, March 15th, 1857.

Prostitution in Relation to Public Health. By WILLIAM ACTON, late Surgeon to the Islington Dispensary. (Reprinted for private circulation.)

This pamphlet is the introductory chapter to the second edition of Mr. Acton’s treatise on Syphilis, but the matter has appeared to him so important, that he has reprinted it for private circulation. Its purport is to point out that syphilis is a disease to be prevented, as cholera or typhus. Without theorizing on the subject, or viewing it from some abstract point of morals, it is sufficient to mention, that Mr. Acton believes that syphilis is as prevalent now as it ever has been, and that, although it is easy to give a numerical statement of its frequency, it prevails among the lower

* Prostitution in relation to Public Health, by William Acton, Esq.

classes in our large towns in a much larger proportion than 1 in 20.* When, therefore, we consider the after-effect of this disease, the injuries it causes to the constitution, the loss of time and labour to the sufferer, the seeds of disease it transmits to the next generations, it cannot be doubted that Mr. Acton is quite justified in believing that preventive measures should be adopted with as much care as if we were dealing with small-pox or ague. We were not, indeed, prepared for the enormous amount of syphilis among our poor population. In five years, there were admitted into the Dreadnought hospital ship 3703 patients out of a total of 13,081, or at the ratio of 28.3 per cent.† In one year, at St. Bartholomew's, among Mr. Lloyd's and Mr. Wormald's out-patients, the proportion was even greater than this, being 2513 patients, out of a total of 5327 of all diseases. Of these 2513, every fourth was a woman or a child.

It is in vain to wait till an advanced morality can check this complaint; we must act with men and diseases as we find them; and Mr. Acton believes that the only mode of preventing syphilis is by providing immediate means to cure it, and thus to prevent its spreading. Syphilitic patients should receive the utmost attention in our public charities, and Lock Hospitals should be provided in greater abundance.

Mr. Acton has done good service by bringing this subject forward.

L'Union Medicale, Oct. 21st, 1851.

M. Acton a placé en tête de son livre une introduction qui a en un certain retentissement et qui le méritait. La publicité qu'elle a reçue par son insertion dans un recueil scientifique et spécial, les *Annales d'hygiène publique*, nous dispensent d'y insister longuement. Qu'il nous suffise de dire que notre honorable confrère, frappé des graves abus qu'entraîne en Angleterre la liberté de la prostitution et des conséquences non moins graves qui en résultent pour la santé publique, a cherché, par une exposition sérieuse et froide de l'état des choses, à fixer l'attention publique sur la progression graduelle de la syphilis et sur la nécessité d'y remédier. Chez un peuple éminemment sérieux comme le peuple anglais, nous sommes convaincu que les préjugés fondés sur une ancienne habitude, sur une interprétation fâcheuse de la loi et des sentiments religieux, ne tiendront pas longtemps devant les chiffres peut-être exagérés qui portent les chiffres des prostituées dans la ville de Londres à 50 et même 80 mille; mais ce devant quoi la résistance faiblira certainement, c'est devant ces relevés sanitaires officiels de la marine et de l'armée, qui montrent que dans l'armée anglaise un homme sur cinq et dans la marine un homme sur sept est affecté de la syphilis. Qui donc voudrait continuer à laisser se répandre dans le pays cette peste qui infecte les générations jusque dans leur source, et qui menace de tout engloutir! Que M. Acton continue dans la voie qu'il a ouverte et il aura peut-être l'honneur d'avoir provoqué dans son pays une des réformes les plus utiles à l'humanité.

Medical Circular, August 26th, 1857.

Proposal to Form a London Female Sanitary Society and Savings Bank.

By WILLIAM ACTON.

There can be no doubt that there is a large class of females cast helpless and hopeless upon the wilderness of large cities—"Hagars in the desert," as the writer of the present *brochure* styles them. We will not inquire how they became associated with their lot; by what base devices or by what treacherous passions they became the cast-aways of society; but there they are, a festering heap of moral and physical evil, leavening with their corrupt influences the entire social mass.

The extent to which the evil ramifies it were difficult to say, nor is it necessary; every medical man of experience must be able to judge for himself.

It is Mr. Acton's wish to enable these wretched women to help themselves. Since the Government will not establish special hospitals for the cure of syphilis, he proposes to found a Benefit Society, which shall be maintained by the contributions of the members. But we will allow the author to speak for himself.

"My proposal, in fact, stripped of all wordy superfluities, is to extend for the first time the advantages of Friendly Societies and Benefit Clubs to an order of women, whom I need not further characterise, but whom few will not admit to bear most important relations to society. I believe that, like their betters, they would soon learn and come to acknowledge the advantages of union, and would show the world that their proverbial improvidence mainly arises from their not being initiated into the practice and the value of thrift."

This is a philanthropic proposition recommended in an earnest spirit, and it deserves to succeed. Whether these women be more wretched than unfortunate is the question upon which the success of this experiment will hang. We hope the latter, and that Mr. Acton's proposal will meet with the glad acceptance of these miserable creatures.

Lancet, August 8th, 1857.

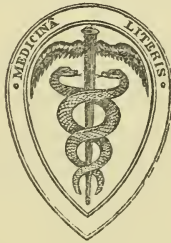
We believe all members of the profession would willingly co-operate in carrying out measures calculated to diminish the spread of diseases thus direful in their consequences as they are loathsome in their nature. The subject has for some years occupied the attention of many earnest and thinking men; and in an excellently written and clearly argued little pamphlet recently issued, Mr. Acton has given the outline of a plan which has received the approbation of many practical professional men, and which the high reputation of Mr. Acton himself entitles to our careful consideration. As far as the details are yet worked out, they seem well calculated to effect the object in view, and to deserve the most cordial approval and support.

* With respect to the Army Returns quoted at page 7, and which give 181 annual admittances into hospital for syphilis per 1000 men, it is possible that the same case may be returned as a fresh admission three or four times,—so that this ratio may be too great. Still the number is no doubt very large.

† The annual cost of syphilitic patients in the Dreadnought is nearly 1000*l.* per annum.

London, New Burlington Street,
October, 1857.

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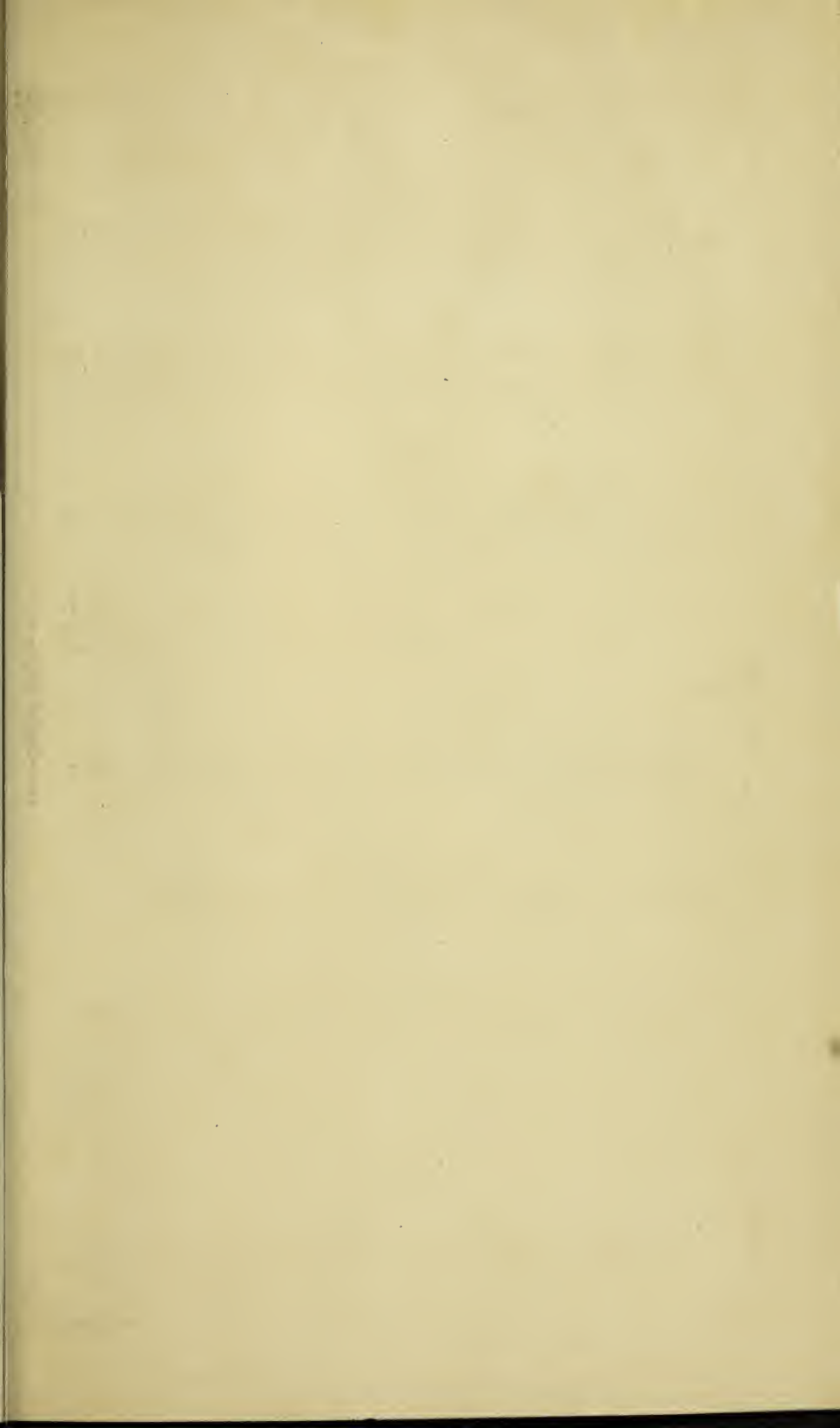
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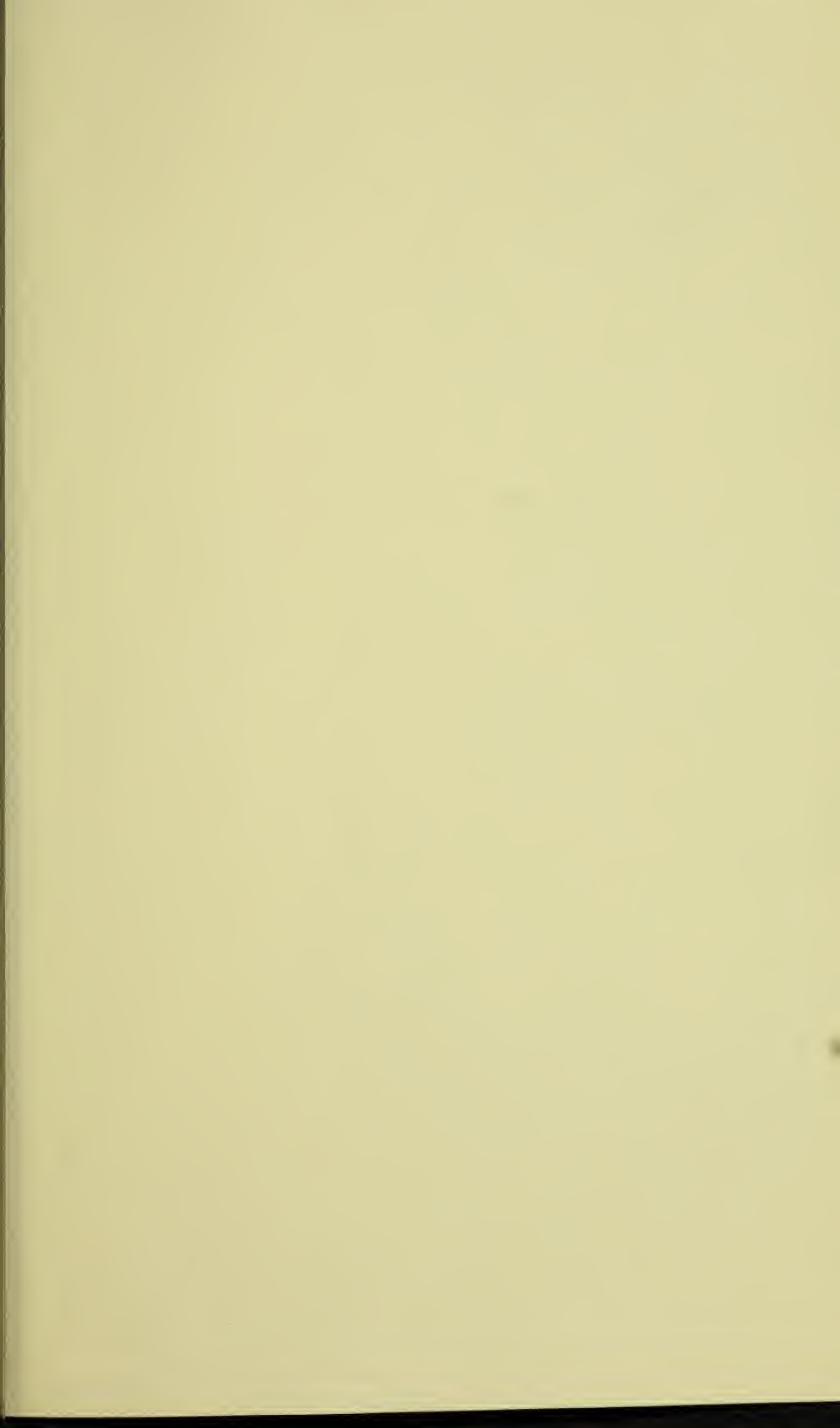
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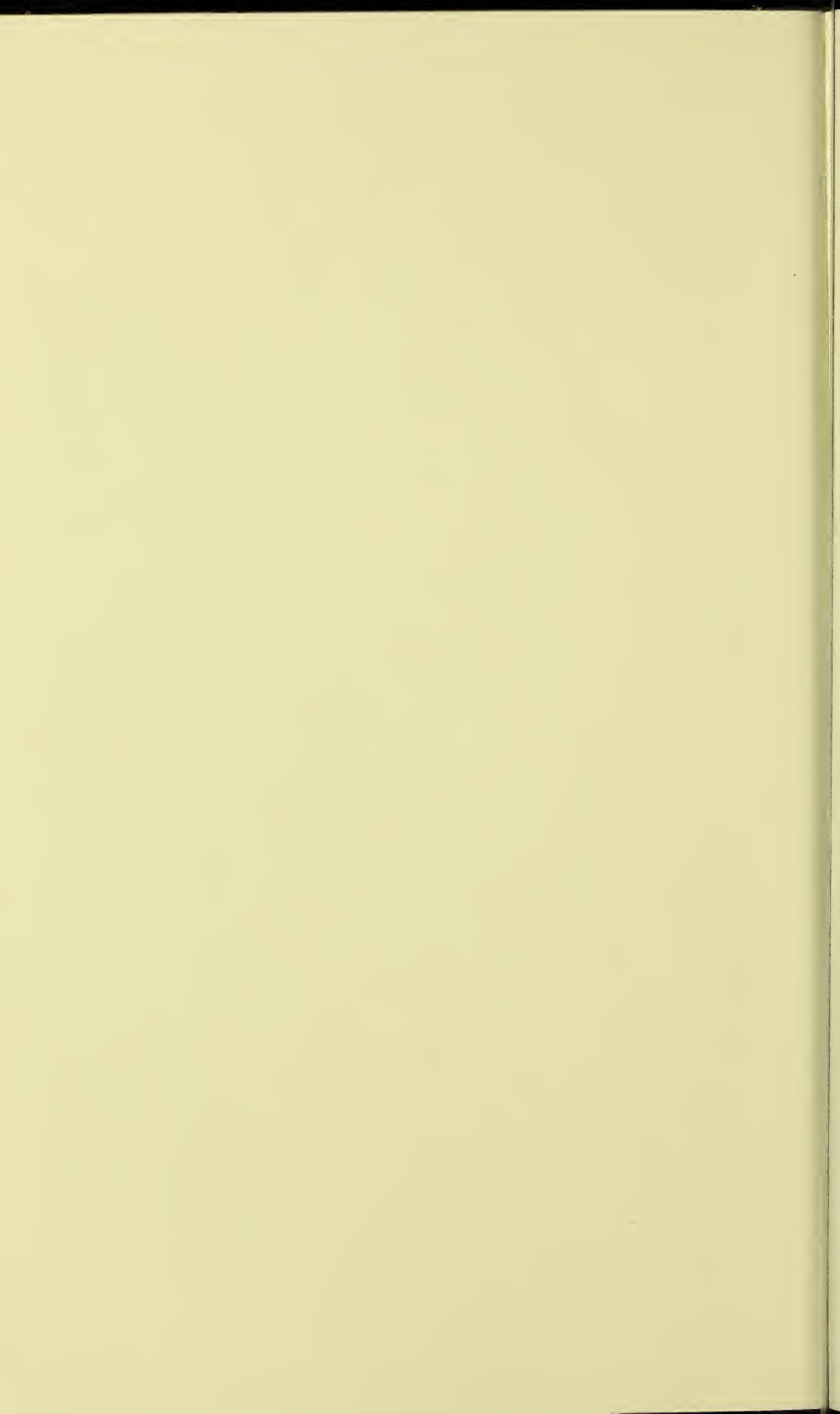


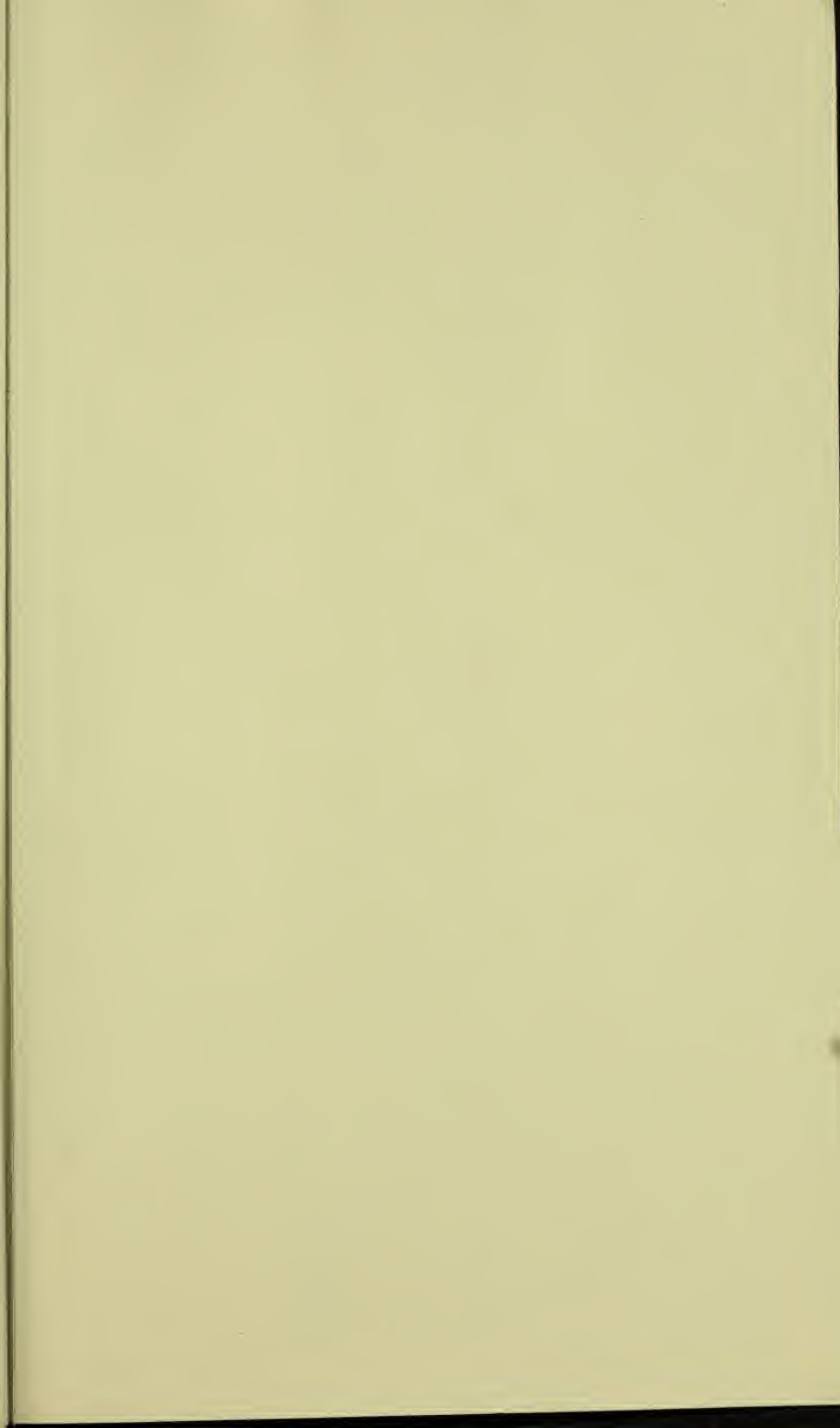












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